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CONTENTS

Around the World in February 499

Portents in the Pacific . . . . . SIR HERBERT RUSSELL, K.B.E. 505
Late Reuter Special Correspondent in Japan

A Disillusioned Cuban DOCTOR EMILIO ROIG DE LEUCHSENRING 512
After Twenty-two Years of Self-Government

Across the Sahara. I . . . . . HENRI DE KERILLIS 515
The Second French Motor-Expedition

My Russian Impressions . . . . . KOSTA TODOROV 526
An Ex-Ambassador in Sovietdom

Articles of the Month

Fresh Light on the Serajevo Crime . . . MARY EDITH DURHAM 532
Was Belgrade Guilty?

The Immortals Converse . . . . . W. R. H. TROWBRIDGE 540

The Great Boar of Birkatheli 547
A Hunting Story from India

Pages from a Composer's Diary . . PETER ILIICH CHAIKOVSKII 556

Ariadne. *A Theatre Guild Play* . . . . . A. A. MILNE 562

A Page of Verse 572

Life, Letters, and the Arts 573

The Book of the Month 577

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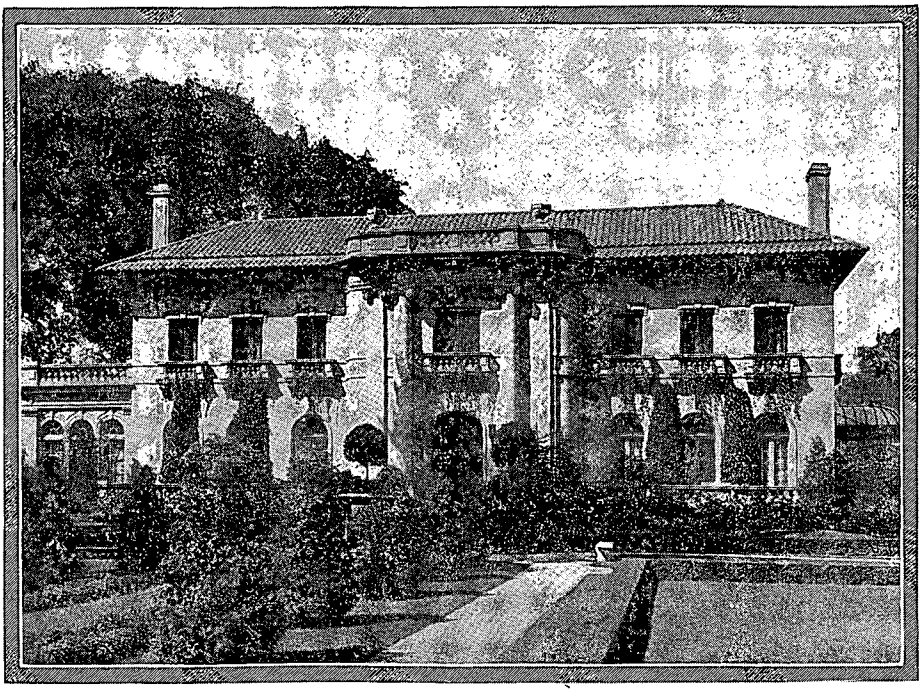

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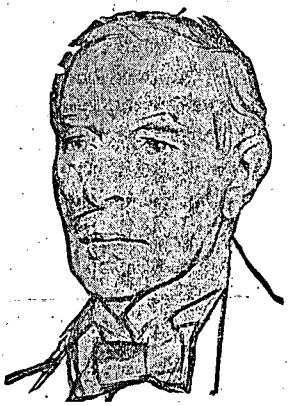

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58 Decameron. *Boccaccio*
72 Illicit Love, etc. *Boccaccio*
73 Tales of Love and Life. *Boccaccio*
74 The Falcon. *Boccaccio*
44 Don Juan. *Balzac*
15 Balzac's Short Stories
6 Love, and Other Stories. *De Maupassant*
99 The Tallow Ball. *De Maupassant*
78 One of Cleopatra's Nights. *Gautier*
57 Is The Moon a Dead World? *Shipley*
559 Robinson Crusoe
560 Electra, Euripides
561 African Jungle Tales
562 Antigone, Sophocles
563 New Light on Prehistoric Cultures. *Shipley*
64 Volney's Ruins of Empires
570 Legend of Saint Julian. *Flaubert*
571 Kant's Philosophy
572 Begger's Opera. *Gay*
73 Gist of Herbert Spencer
74 The Christian System. *Schopenhauer*
575 Essays in Ethics. *Schopenhauer*
576 The Encheiridion or Manual. *Epictetus*
577 The Lifted Veil. *Eliot*
93 As a Man Thinketh. *James Allen*
98 Haeckel: Philosopher-Naturalist. *Fenton*
17 Hamilcar: Great Man of Carthage. *Flaubert*
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163 Sex Life in Greece and Rome
95 Confessions of an Opium Eater. *DeQuincey*
189 Eugenics. *Ellis*
83 Marriage, Past and Present. *Mrs. Besant*
222 The Vampire, etc. *Kipling*
98 How to Love
77 What Great Men Have Said About Women
304 What Great Women Have Said About Men
4 Age of Reason. *Paine*
42 Origin of the Human Race
322 Buddhist Philosophy
219 Human Tragedy. *A. France*
18 Idle Thoughts. *Jerome*
38 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
45 Tolstoy's Short Stories
25 Rhyming Dictionary
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153 Chinese Philosophy of Life
162 Rue Morgue. *Poe*
92 Hypnotism Made Plain
149 Historic Crimes. *Finger*
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321 History of Evolution
209 Aspects of Birth Control
208 Debate on Birth Control. *Mrs. Sanger and Russell*
376 Woman of No Importance. *Oscar Wilde*
377 A Night in Luxembourg. *Gourmont*
482 Five Weeks in a Balloon. *Verne*
437 Hints on Scenario
342 Hints on News Reporting
326 Hints on Writing Short Stories
496 Hints on Writing One-Act Plays
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381 Wisdom of Dickens
382 Humor of Lincoln
417 Nature of Dreams. *Carrington*
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323 Life of Joan of Arc
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12 Poe's Tales of Mystery
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44 Aesop's Fables
156 Andersen's Fairy Tales
84 Love Letters of a Nun
172 Evolution of Love. *Key*
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43 Marriage and Divorce. *Greeley and Owen*
123 Life of DuBarry
250 Romeo and Juliet
59 Epigrams of Wit
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52 Voltaire. *Hugo*
104 Waterloo. *Hugo*
134 Misanthrope. *Moliere*
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325 Essence of Buddhism
33 Brann: Sham Smasher
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THE LIVING AGE

VOL. 324 — *MARCH 7, 1925* — NO. 4209

AROUND THE WORLD IN FEBRUARY

THE refusal of the Dominion Premiers to make a special trip to London to discuss the Geneva Protocol, and the coolness they show toward any proposal to set up machinery for continuous consultation by the self-governing countries of the Empire upon matters of common interest, have called forth several significant articles in the British press. Their substance is not important at the present stage of the discussion, but they are interesting contributions to a debate that may precede far-reaching changes in the Imperial Constitution, if we may give that name to the bundle of precedents and traditions that now holds together the countries under the British flag.

Meanwhile the Geneva Protocol remains the most important item on the international agenda. The *Spectator*, in view of the unfavorable action of the Dominion Premiers, thinks that agreement 'if not dead, yet in a state of suspended animation.' *The Nation and the Athenæum*, an eager advocate of better international understanding, believes that British opinion on its acceptance 'is still fluid' and that Dominion opinion 'is hesitant and uneasy rather than decidedly hostile.' The prevailing attitude both in Great Britain and in the Dominions appears to be that the Protocol should be 'toned down,' so as to impose less exigent obligations upon the Empire. But the document is very difficult to amend. On the other hand, the international outlook remains, according to this authority, 'highly dangerous,' and 'we must not dismiss as negligible the possibility, Protocol or no Protocol, of a serious war within the next decade.'

Since M. Herriot made his belligerent speech against Germany, the French press has been strangely silent about the Protocol, but it has more official support in France than elsewhere in Europe — unless it be in Scandinavia and Switzerland. Of course, the Communists are against it. Their Paris organ, *l'Humanité*, displays its acumen in the following analysis: —

> This question of the Geneva Protocol has thrown significant light upon the relations existing between Great Britain, her colonies, and the United States. We must bear in mind that the League of Nations is the servile instrument of its most powerful member, England, and that the imperialist

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Fabian, MacDonald, expressly designed to make the League of Nations, through this Protocol, a true supergovernment for the profit of English imperialism, exercising its authority through the British fleet. That kind of supergovernment, acting as a camouflage for English imperialism, did not please his Yankee cousins, who naturally would have nothing to do with it.

Dominion cares reveal themselves variously in the British press. It sometimes prints alarmist articles upon the growth of the French-speaking population in Canada — to the immense gratification of any French journalist who picks them up. A writer in the Tory *National Review* remarks on the changing character of the South African electorate, which has put in power a coalition Cabinet lukewarm toward the imperial tie. That electorate has altered greatly since 1906, when self-government was granted to the Transvaal and the Free State: —

> It is less English than it was then. It is more Dutch. It is more South African. Many people do not realize that the Dutch in South Africa outnumber all the other whites by four to three. . . . The electorate in South Africa consists more and more of men born in the country. . . . The South-African-born youth, even of British parents, is apt to become an Africander politically. He is not anti-British, but he is not definitely pro-British.

The most prominent economic question in England's public eye is the proposed bill to safeguard industries, which the Liberals stigmatize as a device to introduce protection 'by the back door.' This will not be a tariff bill, but what we should call a tariff-commission bill, directing the Board of Trade to report on the needs of any industry claiming protection, except those engaged in handling or producing food and drink. Wherever the Board of Trade recommends protective duties, they will be provided in a financial bill.

The Liberal Party has been headlined of late on account of Mr. Asquith's elevation to the peerage, and a convention held at London to discuss Party reorganization. A committee appointed to recommend reforms proposed among other things that no Liberal club be admitted to membership in the National Liberal Federation 'which does not prescribe by its rules that not less than one third of the officers and the members of the local executive shall be women;' and suggests that at least one third of the officers and executives of such bodies shall consist of younger men and women — below the age of thirty-five. Even more to the point, perhaps, is a campaign to raise a million pounds for the Party's war-chest.

The early weeks of the year show little progress toward relieving political tension on the Continent. This is particularly true of the vital question of Franco-German relations. M. Herriot, doubtless irritated by the failure of Germany's voters to reciprocate the overtures toward a Liberal-Democratic policy that the French people made at last May's election, and alarmed by reports of secret arming across the Rhine, delivered a speech in the Chamber of Deputies on January 28 that decidedly lessened the chances of reconciliation between the two countries. Friction over the commercial treaty has aggravated the present disagreement. This recrudescence of ill feeling has frosted Europe's germinating economic hopes. M. Herriot's speech, which was acclaimed by the Opposition press and criticized by some of his staunchest supporters, appeared to assert that the failure of Great Britain and the United States to ratify the guaranty treaty protecting France, in return for which she relinquished her claim to the left bank of the Rhine, restored to his country the right she claimed at the beginning of

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the Paris Conference to make that river her eastern boundary.

This naturally provoked a chorus of 'I told you so's' from Germany, where skepticism as to France's intention ever to release the occupied territories is deep-seated. A debate of Premiers followed that did little to clarify the situation and only confirmed each Party in its original opinion. M. Herriot's critics in his own country protest that all Frenchmen are equally concerned in the safety of their country, that patriotism is no one's monopoly, but that the real question is, Can security best be obtained by a policy of antagonizing or by a policy of conciliating Germany? Sisley Huddleston, whose sympathies are strongly for France where he believes her real interests are at stake, pooh-poohs the present alarm: —

> The sheer truth is that, as anybody might have guessed, France was perfectly safe after the war, and would continue to be perfectly safe had she not in her desire for security entered into all kinds of unnecessary engagements and woven a network of accords in Europe. Why should Germany, with the lessons of the last war in her mind, have attacked France again? It was nearly fifty years after the Franco-Prussian War that the Great War began — and France had indeed lost a part of her territory. Germany would have nothing to gain by another war with France, and would risk much if France kept on decent terms with the rest of the world. After all, nations do not make war for sentimental reasons, such as thirst for revenge. A war is not a test match! The real difficulty is, as everybody knows but has conveniently forgotten, that in the rest of Europe there are territorial and political settlements of 1919 which cannot possibly stand, and which must be revised either in peaceful conference or in bloody strife.

The *New Statesman* calls the French Premier's announcement 'this absurd and almost criminally provocative speech.' Even the Tory *Saturday Review* observes: 'One can understand a certain despair creeping into the hearts of peace-loving Germans when in such circumstances they learn that they and none other are still the brigand power of Europe, and that this fact dominates all French policy.' But M. Herriot's attitude is susceptible of another interpretation. He may intend to force England's hand in accepting the Geneva Protocol. That instrument was clearly designated by his spokesman, Paul Boncour, in a striking message to the French Socialists published in *Œuvre:* 'France will stand on guard at the Rhine bridges until this international control is established.'

Late in January leading representatives of agriculture, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, shipping, handicrafts, and banking consulted in Berlin on the question of restoring the value of Germany's depreciated securities. They unanimously declared that such a measure would seriously imperil the nation's prosperity and solvency. The Nationalists made this restoration of value one of their chief planks in the last campaign, and won many votes by it among holders of pre-war securities, reduced to an infinitesimal fraction of their previous value by the depreciation of the mark. Yet the Luther Cabinet can hardly fly in the face of the best business opinion in the country to carry out a promise that violates common-sense.

A conference of the Baltic States, except Lithuania, at Helsingfors last January ended in the conclusion of an arbitration convention by Poland, Latvia, Esthonia, and Finland. But there is to be no military agreement, nor even, it seems, an immediate tightening of commercial and other economic ties among these countries. The German press interprets this as a defeat for Poland and France, whom it represents

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as laboring to form an anti-Russian and anti-German armed alliance in the Baltic.

Trotskii's dismissal still dominates political discussion in Soviet Russia. The former Commissar's house was searched by the Cheka troops after he left for the Caucasus, and his papers, which contained material believed to compromise the reputations of several of the present leaders, are reported to have been seized. Now Trotskii's arch-enemy, Zinoviev, the head of the Communist International, is rumored to have fallen into disfavor with his associates. His reputation has been injured by disclosures in connection with the pilfering of the contents of the French Embassy at Petrograd to the value of several million francs, discovered since the resumption of diplomatic relations with France. Rakovskii and Krassin are said to be determined to get rid of their unpopular colleague, whom they hold responsible for defeating their diplomatic negotiations with England and for the ill repute of the Moscow Government in Western Europe. *Avanti*, the official organ of the Italian Socialists, which trained with the Communists for several years, — although Italian Labor has recently voted against that Party, — prints a decidedly pro-Trotskii article by Angelica Balabanoff; but the French Communist Party have expelled three of its leading members on the staff of *La Vie Ouvrière*, for defending him.

The Soviet Government has adopted a code of family law regulating marriage, divorce, and other marital relations. This code recognizes private property, and provides that only such part of a family estate as is acquired after marriage shall belong jointly to both parties.

The month's high light in Southeastern Europe was the Yugoslav elections, preceded by the arrest of Radič, the Croat peasant leader, and the suppression of his Party. This was naturally interpreted as an effort to dragoon the opposition to the present Government — a suspicion that the past record of the veteran Serb Premier abundantly justified. The leader of the German Party in Croatia has been assassinated, and prominent public men like Mr. Trombič, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, have been prevented from leaving the country. A correspondent of the *Journal de Genève* writes: 'Russia has her Bolshevism, Italy her Fascism, and Yugoslavia her Pašičism. The last consists in a Party dictatorship over the civil service, the judiciary, the Parliament, and every other public body.' Less than twenty-six per cent of the voters who cast their ballots at the previous election, on March 18, 1923, supported Pašič, while his strongest opponents, the Croat Peasant Party and the Democratic Party together, commanded over forty per cent of the votes. He seems to have swept the country this time by duress.

The Spanish Directory continues to labor in the doldrums. No inkling of real opinion appears in the censored press. The common people seem indifferent to politics, Alfonso enjoys some personal popularity, and active opposition outside of Catalonia is apparently confined to the intellectuals. Abd el Krim, Spain's enemy in Morocco, has captured his most formidable native opponent, Raisuli, and a rich booty, mostly the proceeds of the subsidies Raisuli received from Spain. The defeated chieftain's followers promptly went over to the victor, with whom they probably sympathized at heart.

Italy is enjoying comparative repose since Parliament has taken a holiday and Opposition papers have been muzzled. The month's outstanding event was the enactment of a new electoral bill replacing Mussolini's earlier law,

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under which the Party with the highest popular vote arbitrarily held two thirds of the seats in Parliament, and returning to the old system, practically like our own. After the Armistice Premier Nitti, under pressure from the Popular Party and against the opposition of older parliamentarians, introduced proportional representation. This proved unsatisfactory because it only multiplied the already embarrassing number of blocs in Parliament. Mussolini's original bill provided for plural voting, but this innovation was dropped on account of Fascist opposition. The Popular Party has expelled Miglioli, the radical-reformer priest and former deputy from Soresina, who at one time seemed likely to become its leader.

Primary elections were held in Egypt early in February. Voting is indirect in that country, and the first polls merely chose the ultimate electors. Zaglul Pasha himself was beaten by one vote in Cairo, but his Party is expected to control the new Parliament.

Since Chinese politics have calmed down somewhat and excitement over the American Pacific manœuvres and the Singapore naval base has begun to subside, the Japanese treaty with Russia has been the leading theme in the Orient. We have already commented upon this treaty from the standpoint of the European press. *Le Temps* says: 'Probably the Tokyo Government decided to come to terms with Moscow because it wished to anticipate the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the United States which is predicted as one of the first consequences of the resignation of Secretary Hughes.' Mr. Joffe, who preceded Karakhan as Soviet negotiator in the Far East and is now Moscow's representative at Vienna, laid stress in *Neue Freie Presse* on the fact that the new convention contains nothing looking toward the establishment of spheres of interest in the Far East, or entrenching upon the sovereignty of China. That diplomat recently gave another interview in Vienna, to the representative of the Mexican daily *Excelsior*, in which he said: 'The pacifism so prominent in the governmental circles of North America is assumed merely to disguise that country's capitalist imperialism. Japan realizes this, but, conscious of her present weakness, pretends to be resigned to it. Some day the United States will inevitably bring about a world war just as Germany did in a similar situation. It will come when her economic development and capitalist resources have reached their apogee.'

The Chinese press welcomed the Treaty. Peking *Pao* predicted that it would enable the Japanese Government 'to assume the initiative and to take a positive part in foreign affairs, instead of following the lead of American and European countries.' The Japanese papers, while welcoming the Treaty, did not attach to it such far-reaching international implications. Tokyo *Nichi Nichi* merely remarked: 'If Japan's political and trade relations with Russia are friendly and unhampered, the United States and other nations may find it safe to follow suit. Japan will thus come to be regarded as an earnest disciple of world peace, justice, and humanity.' *Hochi* gave the Treaty qualified endorsement. *Yomiuri* believed its conclusion had been too long delayed but that it was none the less welcome. Other Japanese press comments were confined mainly to discussing the new business opportunities that the Treaty opens.

South America awaits with great interest President Coolidge's decision as arbiter in the Tacna-Arica dispute

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between Peru and Chile. Later dispatches in the South American press describe in detail the exciting events at Santiago and Valparaiso attending the January overthrow of the Directory and the nominal restoration of Constitutional Government. A correspondent of *La Prensa* of Buenos Aires writes: —

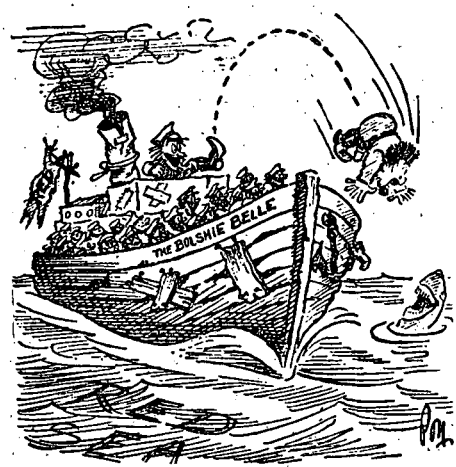
The revolutionary movement that deposed the recent Directory was resolved upon at a meeting of army officers last night, where it was agreed that the authorities had not carried out the programme laid down in the manifesto of the eleventh of last September. Therefore it was decided to turn out the Directory, and that was done at six o'clock last evening. In accordance with the plans agreed upon, one hundred and fifty policemen proceeded to La Moneda at 5.30 P.M. One hundred entered the Palace, and the remainder took up their positions in the building opposite, occupied by the Ministry of War. A few moments later a detachment of the Pudeto regiment arrived with rifles loaded and bayonets fixed, under the command of a lieutenant carrying an automatic pistol. These troops entered the Ministry in search of the Secretary of the Navy, whom they did not find in his office. Immediately other detachments of the Pudeto Regiment and of the regiments of chasseurs and fusiliers marched into the square in front of La Moneda from all directions. They stationed machine-guns at each corner of the square and prepared to resist attack.

Happily no bloodshed occurred, but civil war was narrowly averted. For a time the navy, with the support of one of the Valparaiso regiments and the troops stationed in the northern departments of the Republic, threatened to turn out by force the new Santiago rulers. Fortunately better counsels prevailed, and the difficulties were smoothed over. *Nosotros* of Buenos Aires published in its December issue an appeal signed by two prominent young Chilean Democrats condemning the whole military movement as 'a pathological proceeding that tends to become recurrent and to exercise a baleful, suggestive influence upon the other nations of the continent.'

GERMANY'S JUNKER GOVERNMENT

CHANCELLOR LUTHER. In conclusion, gentlemen, three cheers for the Royal and Imperial German Republic. *Hoch! Hoch! Hoch!* — *De Notenkraker*, Amsterdam

DROPPING THE PILOT: NEW VERSION



The Soviet Commissars Bounce Comrade Trotskii. — *Daily Mail*, London

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PORTENTS IN THE PACIFIC

BY SIR HERBERT RUSSELL, K. B. E.
LATE REUTER SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN JAPAN

From the *Hibbert Journal, January*
(LONDON THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY)

THE attitude of the United States toward the League of Nations has been a source of perplexity to people in this country. Conceived of the ideal of an American President, the League was rejected at birth by the American nation. Such contradictory aloofness has resulted in the misunderstanding which it challenges. Popular opinion on this side of the Atlantic is that a national sense of superiority holds the United States apart. She considers herself too big to join in the cosmopolitan brotherhood. That some such sentiment actually exists in America is probable enough. But it is not an official sentiment, although it may suit official policy to let it be assumed as an explanation — for the present. American statesmanship is very practical, and usually shrewdly diplomatic.

The League of Nations stands for universal peace, and the United States can have nothing but complete sympathy with that doctrine. President Coolidge is openly proclaiming his desire for another conference on disarmament. But there is a very large and very influential party clamoring for a great increase in the navy — for 'a hundred-per-cent fleet' — whatever that may precisely mean. That American politicians will sweep any and every question into the party arena we perfectly well know. But the relation between aloofness from the League of Nations and the demand for a supreme navy is not the natural coincidence of political intrigue. We may find an analogy to it in the fact that while the British Premier was indulging in 'golden dreams' at Geneva the British Admiralty was making a strong strategical redisposition of its battleship forces and still repeating with quiet insistence the word 'Singapore.'

The socialist orator is never weary of telling us that war is caused by capitalists. Well, he is right, although not in the sense in which he means his parrot-cry to be construed. Conflict of national interests — which means the grand aggregate of commercial interests — forms the one standing hostage to armed strife. Territorial aggrandizement no longer counts save in terms of commercial value. Since commerce means capitalism — a term that covers the whole system of civilized barter — the socialist orator is merely uttering a perverted truth.

Dollar-worship is a national quality which even the most sentimental-minded American could not disclaim. An astonishing standard of prosperity whets the appetite for still more. American statesmanship thinks in terms of buying and selling to a degree which our older, possibly loftier, ideals have never assimilated. The end of the Great War opened a disquieting vista to American statesmanship. The flood-tide of national prosperity can be maintained only by means of a great over-

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flow into foreign markets. The markets of Europe became automatically closed to American trade by reason of the extraordinary disparity of exchange. Some long day hence this condition will pass. But while it is passing, Europe is steadily supplying her own markets; when it has passed she will flood them.

Therefore American statesmanship, thinking in terms of buying and selling, has to look elsewhere for the maintenance and increase of national prosperity. And in this contemplation, vision responded to the call of the East. China, in particular, loomed with spacious splendor upon the buying and selling outlook. But a cloud lay across the splendor. That cloud was cast by Japan. The end of the war found Japan in a position of greatly enhanced power, and substantially enriched. She had honorably played her part as an ally to the side which America ultimately espoused. But that part chanced to be one immeasurably to her advantage. It has been openly stated that Japan's promptitude in declaring war upon Germany in 1914 was directly due to her desire to seize a valuable province in China, and thus increase her already firm grip upon that country. Be this as it may, she did seize that valuable province, and with this success her participation in the conflict was reduced to escorting-service by her minor naval units. Meanwhile, under the stimulus of a state of war, she continued to build up her naval armaments, and to develop her army, upon the grand scale.

During the year 1919 a war-weary world was stirred to dull astonishment by the news that the United States Government was embarking on the biggest programme of naval construction ever recorded in history. The thing seemed incredibly contradictory. Against whom could such a measure be directed? Germany was a corpse, so far as sea-power was concerned. Austria and Russia were likewise. France and Italy had sunk relatively in the scale, and of the seven First-class Naval Powers which existed in 1914 there remained only Great Britain and Japan as conceivable objectives for this tremendous spasmodic American outburst.

It was doubtless due to American official policy that the suggestion was allowed to grow — in all probability was adroitly fostered — that the new United States Navy was intended as a 'balance' against British sea-power. Anybody in this country asking the pertinent question, 'Why this sudden rivalry?' was left to find answer in conjecture. America had now got the war spirit. She was aflame with a patriotism which demanded that her flag should rule the waves. She did not want war, but she meant to have prestige. And so forth, and so on. Meanwhile the British Admiralty showed a bland unconcern. Questioned in the House of Commons, the Secretary to the Admiralty admitted that the facts were as published in the newspapers. It was perfectly true that America had actually laid down the keels of a most formidable armada. Her reasons for this policy were entirely her own business. It was really nothing to do with us.

There can be no question that the British Admiralty knew the truth. They kept the secret well, but they quietly completed the plans of the great Singapore base which they asked Parliament to sanction a little later. It is not even now known in this country how perilously near to war with Japan the United States actually was when that colossal naval programme was rushed through Congress. The Washington Conference averted the peril because it left both nations with

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the impression that each had temporarily gained what she wanted.

With the brief statement that American statesmanship realizes that national security demands the control, more and yet more, of raw materials and foreign markets, we will now turn to a contemplation of the position of Japan. It is worth recalling that in 1853 Commodore Perry, in command of a squadron of United States warships, had first forced upon Japan the principle of the open door. We must go back three centuries to discover why the Japanese had pledged themselves to an existence of 'icy isolation.' Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries did their work so effectively during the early part of the seventeenth century that they established a great following. The Japanese Court discovered that a big community were recognizing a sovereign other than their own Emperor. To one who has but the most slender acquaintance with Japanese history, and the Japanese character, the effect of such a revelation will call for no explaining. Not only were all foreigners bundled out, and promised immediate death if they ever showed their faces again, but the Japanese were forbidden to leave their own land, and in order to ensure the effectiveness of this prohibition, no sea-going ships were permitted to be built. Herein we may probably trace the cause of the present-day home-keeping instinct of the race.

The result of the Chino-Japanese war of 1894 was that Korea was declared independent, and the Liaotung province of Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores were ceded to Japan. Russia, apprehensive of the great accession of power which this meant to Japan, and supported by Germany and France, compelled the return of Liaotung to China. Four years later, Germany, seeking a 'place in the sun,' demanded from China a 'lease' of Kiaochow as recompense for the alleged murder of two missionaries. Russia promptly followed suit by asking for and getting a 'lease' of Port Arthur. Great Britain could not view with indifference these encroachments, and correspondingly to strengthen her strategic position acquired Wei-hai-wei, a dominating port in the Gulf of Pechili. France responded by getting the 'lease' of Kwangchow, to balance which we obtained an extension of territory in the colony of Hongkong.

The Great Powers, being installed in their new leaseholds, then entered upon a series of diplomatic contests which came to be known as the 'Battle of Concessions.' As an outcome, international 'spheres of influence' were established, our own embracing the fertile Yangtze Valley, South China, and Shensi. But by this time the passive Chinese were beginning to ask 'Where do we come in?' And this question found active expression in the Boxer Rebellion. One direct result of this rebellion was a determined effort by Russia to occupy Manchuria. It was this attempt which brought about the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

Japan, having herself long cast a languishing eye upon Manchuria, viewed the Russian occupation with deep hostility. But the Japanese, being masters in the art of deceiving themselves, find little difficulty in deceiving others. They successfully cloaked their real sentiments, and began negotiations. An offer, in 1905, to recognize Russia's rights in Manchuria in return for a recognition of Japan's rights in Korea was rejected. Then events moved fast. The war came, and by the Treaty of Portsmouth Russia not only agreed to recognize Japan's rights in Korea, but undertook to evacuate Manchuria, and to restore to Japan the peninsula of Liaotung, in which Port Arthur is situated.

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Her victory over Russia left Japan, in homely metaphor, with both her feet firmly planted in China. Her designs were primarily commercial. But there was likewise a perturbing perception that her population was fast approaching the limits of possibility in capacity of internal support. To-day that population numbers some fifty-six millions, and is increasing at the rate of three quarters of a million a year. When we realize that the terrible earthquake of September 1923 wiped out only one seventh of the increase for the year, it is not difficult to realize the full meaning of the problem. Economically Japan is still self-supporting in foodstuffs, her standard of living being very low as compared with that of Western countries. But this state of independence cannot continue very much longer.

The principal industries of Japan are engineering, textile, cement, bric-à brac, chemicals, paper-making, and brewing. Mining and agriculture employ a large proportion of her population, but in the latter pursuit the Japanese laborer compares most indifferently with the natives of other Asiatic countries. The most profitable of her trades is the silk manufacture, the bulk of which goes to America. Engineering is undoubtedly the most important. This, together with the textile and chemical trades, is entirely dependent upon the importation of raw materials, the home products being almost negligible. Japanese coal is very poor in quality, and the supplies of oil fuel are quite inadequate to the needs of the navy alone.

China is the great natural source of supply to Japan. Hence her ceaseless exploitation of the Celestial Empire. Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth she has followed a consistent, subtle policy of fomenting and financing internal troubles likely to prove to her advantage, of acquiring territory and industrial concessions, and, above all, of excluding foreign competition. If the Chinese only possessed the racial qualities of the Japanese — whom they cordially detest — they would be the richest and most powerful nation in the world.

Strategically Japan is wonderfully placed with regard to China. Her long, strung-out dominions form a sort of sea-barrier, ranging from the Tropic of Cancer to 50° North. From her position she stands between the principal points of European occupation and the high seas. That she would prefer to attain her ends by peaceful methods there can be no doubt. That she will not shirk war if the necessity arises none who knows her history, the temperament of her people, and her fighting organizations, can question.

At present Japan is devoting her intense energy to the development of industry so as to maintain a large export-trade in exchange for raw materials. China is the great potential buyer of her manufactures, as she is the well of her raw supplies. Therefore we have a self-evident reason for the unceasing policy of peaceful penetration, of intrigue, and of diplomatic activity. One point is certain: a strong, united China is the nightmare of Japanese statesmen. The ultimate partition of the Celestial Empire, with the acquisition of rich territories, is what they are working for. One hesitates to say that it is a reprehensible policy, because on the realization of it the future greatness of Japan virtually rests.

That the European Powers, quite as fully as the United States, are alive to the trend of Japanese intent is clearly shown by the course of events since the war. The first startling revelation came with the disclosure of the 'Twenty-one Demands' which Japan presented to

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China as the price of her evacuation of Tsingtau — and which, incidentally, was the genesis of the great American warship-programme. Many of these demands were conceded by China without demur. 'Group V' consisted of several clauses which it was intended to keep secret from the other Powers. They were so preposterous that China cried out in protest. The Powers responded to her cry and insisted upon seeing 'Group V.' As a result it went by the board.

But such a hint was not to be ignored. The 'spheres of influence' idea was abandoned, and a Consortium established, signed by powerful banking groups in Great Britain, the United States, France, and Japan. Under this it was agreed that all loans and future agreements within the former spheres should be pooled. Existing agreements were permitted to remain in force. That such a scheme was distasteful to Japan is obvious, and it remains to be seen how long she will abide by it. That she will continue to concede the doctrine of equality of international interests in a country in which her own concern is so profound is very much open to question.

Japan took a seat at the Washington Conference with a perfectly open mind. Probably she foresaw certain possibilities to her advantage. Be this as it may, she certainly succeeded in carrying her own conditions. In the first place she refused, point blank, to scrap her very latest dreadnought, the Mitsu, a vessel of 33,000 tons, carrying sixteen-inch guns. Long and persevering were the arguments to try and persuade her; bland and inscrutable the smile of refusal. So the Mitsu remains, a ship-to-ship match for any warcraft in the world in aggressive and defensive powers. But far more important was the polite insistence that America should maintain the status quo in Guam and the Philippines. The United States really wanted the Washington Conference brought to a satisfactory issue. She was beginning to realize that she had 'bitten off more than she could chew' in her colossal programme of new construction — that she might indeed build the projected ships, although the country was loudly murmuring at the enormous expenditure to which it was being committed for a purpose it generally failed to perceive, but that it would prove quite impossible to man them under the voluntary system. The American Government, in fact, wanted to save its face, and the Washington Conference offered the opportunity for doing so with a beneficent gesture.

So again Japan carried her point. The consequence is that Guam and the Philippines, the two perfectly situated bases for the conduct of naval warfare in the Pacific zone, remain most indifferently defended, and entirely without accommodation for docking modern capital ships. Their defenses, indeed, are of quite second-class value, and one of the first obvious acts on the part of Japan in the event of hostilities would be to seize them, thereby seriously crippling the United States Fleet in any attempt at offensive action, and correspondingly increasing her own aggressive scope in that wide ocean.

But Japan went further. Under the most friendly demeanor in the world, she threw her weight into the scale against us on the question of Hongkong. And in the end we signed an undertaking not to develop that ideal base, with the result that it remains quite inadequate to deal with the requirements of a modern fleet. It is a source for wonderment that the United States did not take a strong stand upon this point. Hongkong as a first-class capital-ship base would have stood as a much more effective guaranty for the

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maintenance of peace in the Pacific than the Hongkong that now exists. As an alternative the Singapore scheme was brought forward — not a new idea by any means, but one assuming a suddenly accentuated importance by virtue of the Washington agreement.

Taken in all its aspects, indeed, the Washington Agreement constitutes a fine testimony to the plausible persuasiveness of Japanese diplomacy. The United States professes to be well satisfied with the agreement, because it restricts the primary sea-armaments of Japan — which was the real objective of Washington. But it conceded very much more than it gained. It leaves Japan with an immense initial strategical advantage. At the present time her shipyards are humming with activity in the construction of every type of warcraft which the terms of the compact leave her free to build. Her current programme, not merely proposed, but actually in various stages of materialization, is as big, in point of total tonnage, as those of Great Britain and the United States combined. What is the purpose of this strenuous activity? It is difficult to regard it as a purely defensive measure in the existent posture of world affairs.

The answer is not far to seek. The real explanation lies in that trade rivalry which the Washington Conference did not — could not — touch. The markets of the Far East appeal to American statesmen as holding the great promise of continued and increased prosperity for American commerce. For even more urgent reasons do they also appeal to Japan. It was very largely through the influence of Canadian feeling — which naturally reflects American feeling — that Great Britain definitely abandoned the pro-Japanese policy conveyed by the alliance. Our plan had been to let Japan do pretty well as she pleased in China, so long as she did not run counter to British interests. Such a course may not have represented a very high moral code, but it at least kept us clear of trouble in the Far East. Then came the Nine-Power Treaty, which confronted Japan with a threat of isolation. Mr. Hughes was developing a vigorous policy which, had it been continued, could only have led to the inevitable result of war. He assumed a sort of moral guardianship over China, and the consequent right to limit Japanese expansion in the only direction which remained open to it.

The situation to-day, placid enough though it may appear upon the surface, is not one from which contemplation draws reassurance. The American Immigration Act has caused intense bitterness of feeling in Japan, and to this extent has proved a distinct asset to the great war-party in that country. The withdrawal of Japan from Shantung and Siberia has been cited as proof positive of peaceable intentions. But the truth is that the resources conserved by this economic step are being devoted to accelerate the process of 'peaceful penetration' in China. So long as the United States continues to tolerate that peaceful penetration, so long as she passively watches the gaining of new concessions, the stealthy process of acquisition, and the subtle squeezing-out of foreign competition, so long all will be well. But her aloofness from the League of Nations has a disquieting import. Japan is stacking up her naval and military resources with steady perseverance. She is not a wealthy Power, measured by Western standards, but her credit stands high and she possesses a great gold reserve. It is beside the mark to point out that she could not hope to win, if only on the grounds of endurance, in a war with the United States. Her answer is, Could the United States hope to win in

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a war with her, with Manchuria as the objective? From the Panama Canal to Tsushima is a mighty long stretch, and a stretch unrelieved by any bases on the way, — assuming Guam and the Philippines to have been seized, — nor with any recuperating haven at the end.

China would like nothing better than to see a war between the United States and Japan. She realizes that it is the one definite hope of salvation from the prospect of dismemberment and the ultimate passing of much of her choicest territory into Japanese hands. But China is in no condition to render any effective military assistance to the United States. Indeed, she would probably prove more of an embarrassment than a help, because her entry into a war would leave Japan free to seize any *points d'appui* she might choose. About the only effective thing China could do would be to repudiate her present heavy financial obligations to Japan.

The cloud is not as yet casting much of a shadow. But it is bound steadily to grow in intensity. The British Admiralty were prepared to wait ten years for the completion of the Singapore scheme. By that time the expansion of the population of Japan will have well-nigh reached the limit of insular containment. The problem is certainly not simplified by the strong home-keeping instinct of the race, since this means a disposition to tolerate a congestion which will only break its bounds when it becomes physically unsupportable. Our own attitude toward an Americo-Japanese struggle is not easy to conceive. Popular sympathy would naturally be influenced by the circumstances under which conflict was joined, as it was during the Russo-Japanese war. But popular sentiment does not necessarily coincide with wise national policy. At the present time the only active interest the United States shows in the affairs of the rest of the world lies in the direction of debt-collecting. Whatever justification may exist for an attitude of insistent detachment, it is bound to exercise a reactionary effect. In other words, we might quite well find our own obligations limited to the safeguarding of our own interests — no very easy task, either, when crowded trade-routes run through the heart of a hostile zone.

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A DISILLUSIONED CUBAN

BY DOCTOR EMILIO ROIG DE LEUCHSENRING

From *Cuba Contemporánea, December*
(HAVANA LIBERAL REVIEW)

[A LEADING publicist of Cuba here draws an unsatisfactory balance-sheet of two decades of Cuban self-government. The article is translated from the author's address before the Cuban Society of International Law on the twenty-second anniversary of the establishment of the Republic.]

WHEN our island severed the bonds that united her as a colony to Spain and set up a free and sovereign republic, she merely took the first step, though unquestionably one of transcendental importance, along the path of national regeneration of which her sons dreamed when they were fighting for her independence.

Our change of government was not casual, fortuitous, and unforeseen. It was the fruit of the slow, persistent, carefully meditated labor of two generations of patriots who had devoted their energy, their fortunes, and even their lives, to attaining — by political reform or by armed force — certain ideals, to which they dedicated all their efforts. As early as 1837 Cuban patriots petitioned Spain, without result, to grant our island political reforms and constitutional privileges. From this effort sprang the Reform Party and the famous *Junta de Información*, both of which labored incessantly, though vainly, for this object.

More than thirty years passed, and on the tenth of October, 1868, the revolution of Yara broke out. Its objects were clearly expressed in the manifestoes and proclamations of its leaders: 'Cuba aspires to be a great and civilized nation. We seek universal suffrage, in order to ensure the sovereignty of the people. We stand for the emancipation of the slave, free trade with nations that grant us reciprocal privileges, and a representative assembly to enact our laws.'

When this revolution was suppressed, after ten years' fighting, both Parties — the Autonomists, who sought Dominion status under Spain, and the Revolutionists, who sought complete independence — continued to labor for their respective ideals. In 1892, when the Cuban Revolutionary Party was organized, it declared its purpose to be to abolish the arbitrary methods and bureaucratic institutions of the colonial régime, and to substitute for them democratic institutions adequate to deal wisely and efficiently with the problems arising out of 'the sudden bestowal of liberty upon a society organized for slavery.' . . .

Have we been true to these ideals and programmes? Have we acted in accord with the doctrines and the spirit of the Revolution since attaining our independence? Most assuredly no!

The first years of our existence as a republic were years of difficulty and disorder. No sooner was the new government set up than the very vices

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and errors that the fathers of the Revolution had sought to eradicate everywhere reasserted themselves: partisan hatreds; personal self-seeking; corrupt greed; contempt for law, liberty, and justice; lack of patriotism; defiance of authority — which was now Cuban authority; abuse of power by those in office, and apathetic tolerance of such abuses by those who were not. Saddest of all, those vices are often flaunted in our eyes by the very men who fought and bled ostensibly to destroy them. We have changed our flag, we have changed our form of government, but at bottom there is no perceptible difference between the republic of to-day and the colony of yesterday.

Such has been our indolence and remissness in legislative and judicial reform that we are put to shame by what the fathers of the Revolution accomplished amid the hardships, distress, and perils of their precarious campaigns. Without waiting for victory to crown their labors, they enacted laws providing a civil government, regular taxes, and a military establishment; they adopted a penal code and a code of procedure; they passed legislation prescribing the qualifications of voters and regulating marriage and divorce. But we, with all the machinery of government in our hands, and during a period of peace, have not even put on our statute books the measures called for by the Constitution — measures that are indispensable for the normal functioning of the government. We have never defined by statute political crimes, although they are mentioned in the Constitution. We have never passed a press law, although liberty of the press is guaranteed in the Constitution. We have never given legal definition to such fundamental civic rights as those of holding meetings and forming associations. We have failed to legislate regarding such all-important subjects as agriculture, commerce, immigration, and labor.

When Spanish rule terminated, a few indispensable modifications in the existing laws were made by decree of the American Governor-General, and certain general provisions governing elections, the Civil Service, and provincial and municipal administration were drafted by his Advisory Council. But we still retain unchanged practically all the colonial laws in force in Cuba before 1899; although Spain herself has subsequently modified these laws at home and brought them up to date.

Not only is our system of law thus antiquated, but it is in the utmost confusion, because it has been amended piecemeal and at haphazard by conflicting and sometimes unintelligible orders of the American Governor-General during the period of intervention, and by our own subsequent enactments.

But we need to reform more than our laws. We must reform our customs. The stagnation, and even the retrogression, of our administrative and political life could hardly be more complete and disastrous than it is. Our republican practice still copies servilely what four centuries of colonial corruption taught us. Nearly every public evil from which we suffered during the Spanish régime, and against which we so bitterly protested from the platform, in the press, and on the battlefield, we have perpetuated of our own free will under the Republic. Indeed we have in many cases aggravated these evils.

I have already referred to the failure of Congress to pass needed and beneficial legislation. Let me now speak of some of the detrimental laws that body has enacted. During our twenty-two years of self-government we have not only neglected the pressing legal re-

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forms that the nation demands, but we have passed many laws for the special benefit of private enterprises and individuals, to the serious loss of the public treasury and the injury of the general welfare. Members of Congress have benefited by some of these bills, and have profited by their parliamentary immunity to escape the legal consequences of their corrupt acts.

Our political parties have no differences of principle to distinguish them from one another, and no ideals to recommend them to the voters. The candidates whom they run, with a few commendable exceptions, are nominated by rigged-and-bought conventions and are not men qualified either by ability or character for public office. The consequence is that the citizens elected to legislative and executive positions in the Central Government, the provinces, and the municipalities are not men of the people's choice, but are appointees of caciques and politicians whose influence or whose money enables them to put in public office agents who serve their personal interest at the expense of the country and the general welfare.

Our national treasury has become the private estate of the men at the head of the Government and of their political supporters, friends, and relatives. We have developed a specific political conscience which permits men of spotless character in private life, model husbands and fathers, to act in public office with a total disregard for the standards of honorable conduct they would observe in private business. The administration of justice is not always gratuitous or impartial, and the abuse of the pardoning power nullifies the labors of the magistrates who are competent and honest.

As in the days of the colony, our streets are filled with hawkers of lottery tickets, and the cockpit and games of chance still undermine the morals of rich and poor alike in both city and country.

Our public-school system is going from bad to worse, and illiteracy is increasing at a rate terrifying to those who stop to think, and who have the future of the Republic at heart. This retrogression and disorganization is manifest, not only in our primary schools, but also in our institutions of secondary and higher instruction. Even in the university, which aspires to be the supreme centre of our national culture, professors are often appointed in precisely the same way, and for the very same reasons, as petty ward-officials.

We have given no attention to improving our racial stock. It is the same that it was in colonial days. We have not tried to attract immigrants who would fortify our blood and identify themselves permanently with the fortunes of our country. To-day, as yesterday, Spanish immigrants from certain provinces of the Peninsula continue to flock to our shores. They are good, industrious fellows, but are qualified for a very limited range of vocations. And to make comparison between colonial yesterday and republican to-day more striking, we still import, in defiance of our immigration laws, just as we did in olden times, cargoes of Chinamen practically bought by the head, who take bread from the mouths of our native Cuban workers. And if the slave trade has ceased, we still have indentured Negro-labor, the principal difference being that instead of coming, as formerly, from Africa, it now comes from Jamaica and Haiti. . . .

Furthermore, in this very year 1924, Republican Cuba, where there is complete separation of Church and State, has revived the religious question, forgetting that our Constitution guar-

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antees complete liberty of conscience to all.

My space does not permit me to dwell further on these problems. I have merely enumerated them, in order that my patriotic fellow-citizens may examine and consider them thoughtfully. As great Varona once said: 'Our unhappy past suddenly rises before us, to throw in our teeth the taunt that we have fought, labored, and bled in vain. The generation of Cubans that preceded us, and that showed itself so great in its hour of sacrifice, may well regard us with astonishment and grief, and ask, bewildered, if this is the result of its labor — of the labor to which it devoted its heart and its life. The monster it thought it had crushed is still alive. The serpent of the fable has reunited its severed parts, that the keen blade of the hero had cleft asunder. Republican Cuba is the twin sister of colonial Cuba.'

ACROSS THE SAHARA. I

BY HENRI DE KERILLIS

From *L'Écho de Paris, January* 8, 10, 12, 14, 19, 21
(CLERICAL DAILY)

AT 2 A. M. on the cold, dark morning of November 15, while the population of the oasis were still wrapped in deep slumber, we left Kolomb-Bechar followed by a parting 'Good luck!' from the commanding officer, who stood at the salute. Our four Renault cars, the first containing Marshal Franchet d'Esperey and M. Gaston Gradis, who directed the expedition, and the last a young lieutenant and myself, filed slowly through the darkness. By the side of each chauffeur sat a soldier of the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion.

Our route lay across difficult and broken country where we could see nothing except the great boulders that our headlights picked out of the darkness, and the black shadows that danced behind them. The only incident was when one of our side lights revealed on our left an Arab mounted on a donkey. He proved to be the postboy from Adrar, a remote military post 375 miles south of Kolomb-Bechar. Formerly the mail was brought by caravans, but their camels proved such tempting booty for the pirates of the desert that this modest conveyance has been substituted. Farther on we descried the camp fire of one of the patrols that had been thrown out for our protection. A moment's stop, a few words exchanged, and again we were enveloped by the night.

At length a faint, hesitating glow was visible on the horizon, and a few minutes later the vast reaches of the desert unrolled before our vision. Great cliffs bounded the distant horizon on every side — long horizontal walls confining the dreary expanse of comparatively level plain. The latter was an endless succession of gray furrows, often ending in points, like the prow of a ship. In the distance their clear-cut contours softened to grotesque

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shapes resembling antediluvian monsters in repose.

Immediately we were surrounded by a wonderful play of colors. Every glittering stone and facet of the billowy plain borrowed a distinct hue that changed, as we watched it, from brilliant violet to glowing red, pale blue, purple, yellow, or tender green. The clouds also donned bright morning tints until they seemed like tenuous draperies slowly wafted across the firmament. But it was all over in a moment. The sun rose and flooded us with its ruddy light. The delicate tints vanished, to be succeeded by a pale, livid radiance that suggested a sort of fantastic moonshine. This is a common desert phenomenon. The rays of the sun, when it first peeks over the horizon, are unable to penetrate at once the clouds of microscopic dust that eternally hover like a white smoke over the Sahara, and that no rains ever wash from the air.

At Igli the little cavalry garrison of some thirty men was out to meet us. They fired a rifle volley by way of salute, and fell in behind us at a gallop. After leaving this isolated outpost our route followed the valley of the Saoura, a labyrinth of dry watercourses along which palm trees grew. At this point our trail lay through soft sand.

How shall I describe a Sahara trail? Worn by the passage of caravans for centuries, it crosses sombre plains, broad waterless valleys, and desolate gravelly flats, or winds between sand dunes and barren hills from one ever-retreating horizon to the other. It makes wide detours from water hole to water hole. Sometimes it is hemmed in by narrow gorges scarcely wider than the path; sometimes it spreads out over a flat for half a mile in width. It is a river of life flowing through lifeless sand. For long distances little rows of pebbles or piles of stones help the eye to trace it. This scanty road-work was done by prisoners. How many unhappy creatures have, first and last, shortened their little span of life miserably lugging these stones about under the burning African sun! But such enforced labor is no longer sufficient. The automobile and the tractor are more exigent than the camel; and our soldiers are now employed upon this work.

Along the Saoura the landscape changes. After the stony desert, we were now amid smiling palm-groves interspaced with lofty sand dunes. Caravans passed at frequent intervals. Impassive camel-drivers, with their rifles slung across their backs, saluted us without pausing. Our machines rustled through dry tufts of aromatic herbs and low-growing shrubbery. The hot, steady breeze that blows perpetually across the desert at this hour had risen, and tiny whirlwinds chased each motor-car. We were now going at a rapid pace, as if impatient to penetrate the melancholy mystery of the great continent south of us. I was conscious of an instinctive thrill of terror. It is doubtless the same terror that drives back wild animals from the desert's edge. I regretted for a moment that I had come. I felt an impulse to turn back, to flee from the dreadfulness of this overwhelming solitude. Too late, my friend, too late!

Too late — and besides, there was much to see and much to think about. Thousands of years ago the elephant first crossed these deserts, by the better-watered routes. Thus Carthage recruited her troops of war elephants. Later, perhaps only a couple of thousand years ago, the camel, reaching Egypt after the Persian conquest, made his way here. Now he in turn is surrendering his place to the automobile. In this world, where a thou-

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sand years has hitherto passed like a year, a new age of modern time-measurements is dawning.

As my mind dwelt on such thoughts as these, my spirits gradually rose. The sense of oppression vanished. I felt exhilarated at approaching the unknown, the mysterious, the boundless new world of lunar landscapes that lay ahead.

At 1 P.M. we reached Beni Abbes. The dazzling white walls of its *bordj*, or adobe fort, surmount a cliff that overlooks the dry channel of the Saoura, the green palm-groves, and the old native *ksar*, or fortified village. Lookouts had long since signaled our coming. Cannon began to boom. An officer galloped up and saluted the Marshal with his sabre. A fanfare of trumpets followed.

We entered the narrow, twisting road that ascends to the eagle's nest above. I was astonished at the size of the crowd that awaited us. Arabs of different tribes, Berbers, descendants of the old ghettos of Cyrenaica, in trailing robes, Harratins, black men from the South, and groups of laughing women — they all greeted us with happy shouts. The oasis was *en fête*.

We left Beni Abbes at 4 P. M., hoping to reach before dark a mountainous region to the southward where a detail of troops was awaiting us. This portion of the route is considered dangerous. The redoubtable *djouch*, or raiding bands from Morocco, slip down through the dry valleys from their distant mountain fastnesses to rob caravans at this point. They are skillful land pirates, well aware that machine-guns quickly become sanded and useless in the desert, and that rifles are but little protection in an ambuscade. But man proposes and God disposes on a trip like this. We lost our way twice following false trails, and were not able to reach our rendezvous.

'So much the worse. We camp here,' said M. Gradis. And we camped. Our cars were parked in an open square in such a position that their headlights could sweep the entire surrounding country. The Marshal's tiny tent was pitched in the middle of this square; campfires were lighted; a hot meal was speedily prepared and even more quickly dispatched, for we were excessively tired and the chill that follows sundown in the desert was most uncomfortable. The Marshal disappeared in his tent, and the rest of us rolled up in our blankets on the sand. A soldier stood guard.

My companions were soon asleep, but I was kept awake, not by the noise, but by the silence, of the desert. It seemed to me a ferocious, threatening silence, this stillness of the Sahara night, far worse than the mysterious murmur of the foliage and obscure noises made by the nocturnal animals, birds, and insects in the jungle or the northern wilderness. I had a sense of being surrounded by infinite vacancy, by a nothingness without bounds. The air seemed to thirst for noise as the sand thirsted for water. It was more than the silence of the tomb — it was the silence of interstellar space.

We broke camp at four in the morning, and with the first light of day picked up easily enough the little heaps of stone that marked the route from which we had strayed. At the foot of the low mountains of the Saoura M. Gradis left the main trail to cross a large palm-grove by a camel-path close to the dry channel. This is the 'Palm Allée,' well known to the people of the Sahara. Although our machines labored heavily in the deep sand, we had the pleasure of contemplating one of the pleasantest bits of scenery in Africa's great-desert landscape.

The Saoura, now but the vestige of a great Sahara river of the Quaternary

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period, is a vanishing wadi that marks the boundary between two deserts — a desert of stone and a desert of sand. Toward the east as far as the vision reaches lies a boundless, sinister chaos of limestone hills, cut here and there by precipitous gorges. Toward the west rises an immense chain of sand dunes. The two deserts meet at the edge of the palm-grove through which we were traveling, and the sharpness of the contrast was striking.

Nowhere did I get a better view of the sand country than here. The great dune-range lifted itself in gigantic heaps five or six hundred feet high. At places the sand formed pyramids as symmetrical as if they were built by the hand of man, with sharp crests like blades of steel. Their summits had never been ascended, and are as unexplored as the poles themselves. Elsewhere the sand assumed more irregular forms, resembling a lunar landscape with enormous craters, terrifying shell-holes, and a thousand writhing undulations that rolled away in tumultuous confusion until lost on the far horizon. There is an amazing variety of colors — ranging from the snow-white of the peripheral wavelets to glowing yellow, golden red, ruddy orange, and the brick-red patina of ancient weathered deposits. Occasionally the surface is smooth, polished, as immobile as the glinting face of a glacier or a mirror; but in most places it is covered with tiny moving, undulating wrinkles — the minute wavelets of a vast waterless ocean.

Whirlwinds were almost constantly visible — trembling, spiral, smokelike columns that sometimes even capped the very summits of the highest dunes. They terrify the desert nomads, who spur their animals to escape the breath of the spirits of the sand, the 'waltzing jinns' — mysterious dwellers in the great *ergs*, evil spirits biding their time to seize the unwary wayfarer.

We breakfasted at the point where we left the Saoura. The keen desert air sharpened our appetite and we were ravenous. While we listened to the Marshal's reminiscences of his campaigns in Tunis and Morocco, several natives approached from the palm-grove and stopped at a respectful distance to observe us. '*Salaam! Alic!*' (Good morning, good morning!) They were Harratins, or mixed bloods, descended from Arabs, Sudanese slaves, and aboriginal Berbers. They scrutinized us with marveling, half-frightened eyes, as they stood there motionless in their white-cotton rags, surveying with equal wonder our automobiles, our klaxons, the golden epaulets of the Marshal, my high laced boots, and the miraculous tin cans from which emerged strange and unknown foods — salmon, corned beef, and sardines.

We bade farewell to all signs of life at the edge of the palm-groves. Soon the whole landscape changed, and we entered upon a great barren plateau such as I had never before seen in the Sahara — no rocks, no gravel, no sand, only black soil as far as the eye reached, suggesting a vast cultivated field, ploughed and rolled, before the first green of the new crop has appeared.

Night overtook us on this plateau. Following the path cut through the darkness by our headlights, we made rapid progress. Huddled in my car, I closed my eyes to shut out the unreality of it all. The familiar world at home began to seem an immeasurably distant and unreal thing. It was as if I had been transported to another planet. Poor little France is such a midget of a place compared with these vast desert-expanses. And we men, how tiny, how insignificant we become in this immensity.

Meanwhile our machines chugged on monotonously, their regular panting

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the only sound that broke the desert silence. A pitch-black heaven concealed the stars. Hours passed like minutes — or like centuries. . . . Suddenly I was startled by a glimpse of shadows passing and disappearing in the sweep of the light ahead. In a moment I could make out camels, horses, men. Lanterns were moving here and there. A long white wall emerged from the darkness; a watchman rang a bell from a high belfry. We drew up sharply at the end of a drawbridge. I saw officers and soldiers clustering around the leading car where the Marshal was. Descending painfully with fatigue-stiffened limbs, I stood bewildered by the weird mediæval vision before me. We were at Adrar, the last French outpost in Southern Algeria, the jumping-off place from which we were now to plunge into the Tanezruft, the land of fear and thirst.

On the morning of the seventeenth of November Adrar was awakened by a wild tumult of chanting, cheering, rifle volleys, and drum-beating. All of us, with the exception of Marshal Franchet d'Esperey, who occupied the only private room in the bordj, were sleeping in an immense, dark, thick-walled room, — most comfortable quarters in the Sahara, — on camp beds provided by the soldiers. We were on our feet in an instant, and as we had slept in our clothes it took but a moment to rush out to the only gate of the fortress, which is flanked by two square towers, where a great crowd was rapidly gathering. There we watched at our ease the celebration that the natives had arranged in honor of the Marshal — their famous *fête du baroud*, or powder festival.

Imagine first some musicians playing on little drums, big drums, and great copper cymbals. Their short, nervous, staccato rhythm, confined to three or four notes of the primitive scale, had apparently been borrowed from the barbarous tom-tom of the Negro villagers of the Niger Valley, brought hither by the slave caravans that have crossed the Sahara for ages. Surrounding the musicians in a large circle, standing shoulder to shoulder, were the rifle-dancers. The dance was not really a dance, but a kind of military drill. The performers went through a sort of manual of arms or athletic exercise with their rifles, at the same time chanting a monotonous refrain and moving slowly in an unbroken circle. Each evolution was performed in perfect time to the accompaniment of the song. After this had lasted for a long period, at a sign from the leader the guns were suddenly aimed toward the centre of the circle and fired with such precision that a hundred shots sounded like one. As if intoxicated by the odor of the powder-smoke, the circle broke, while its members, shouting wild war-cries, became a howling mob. This was repeated over and over again under the burning sun. Perspiration flowed down black countenances; new volleys were fired; the chant rose higher and wilder. Ten — twenty times the baroud was repeated; in fact the warlike ecstasy showed no signs of relaxing until the sun was far below the zenith.

Our itinerary provided for a day's rest at Adrar, and a most agreeable interlude it proved to be. Accompanied by a lieutenant of the garrison, I visited the old village, with its long walls of red clay and its narrow, winding streets; I explored the palm-groves, where the precious water is measured out with scrupulous exactness to every tree or row of millet stalks; I took a camel-ride, at the imminent risk of becoming seasick; and last of all — a veritable revelation — I inspected the *foggaras* of the oasis.

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My previous idea of an oasis was a tiny romantic sort of desert paradise where a limpid fountain, gurgling from the earth, surrounded itself with a girdle of refreshing verdure. I had no conception of the ages of human labor that have been devoted to creating an oasis like that of Adrar. The water is conducted through an extraordinary and immense system of subterranean aqueducts whose origin is lost in antiquity. Their beginning has left no history, not even in the legends of the most ancient native tribes. Adrar lies at the bottom of a little natural basin that a marvelous irrigation system connects with reservoirs feeding the surrounding plains at a higher elevation than itself. With no better implements than rude picks and scoops, the natives have dug, at a depth of from 150 to 200 feet below the surface, spacious, regular tunnels that extend for tens of miles. In this way the extremely scanty rainfall — on an average it rains but once in ten years at any given point in the Sahara — is conserved by collecting the ground moisture from a great expanse of territory at a single place. These wonderful tunnels, or foggaras, are connected with the surface at intervals of every hundred yards or so by air holes, or *seggia*, which enable the workers below to breathe. Even to-day, with all our modern engineering knowledge and equipment, the construction of such an immense network of subterranean galleries would be a task comparable to providing a metropolis with subways. One speculates in bewilderment as to who the unknown pioneers were, coming doubtless from Egypt or from Libya, who had the courage to begin this tremendous work. Had they uncounted minions at their call? It is difficult to believe it. How would hosts of workers have lived in this sterile land? Or were they only a small guild of tunnel men, remote ancestors of the strange corporation that still survives, and that, though it has now lost the secret of constructing these galleries, still understands how to maintain them? If the builders were but a guild like that, what endless centuries it must have taken them to complete their labor. A mystery of the Sahara!

We left Adrar at 11.30 A.M. on November 18 in the direction of Oulahoun in the centre of the Sahara. Our route for over three hundred miles lay across an absolutely pathless waste. There is no water along the course, and no caravan had ever made the trip. This short cut, shorter than the caravan route by 180 miles, was first taken by a French automobile expedition only a year or two ago. You can imagine the emotions with which we began to follow the wheel-marks of our predecessor; for it had not rained since they passed this way.

We were now upon still a different kind of soil — a red clay mixed with sand, almost as hard as a pavement, and as flat as a floor. This reddish plain was scantily sown with tiny pebbles. The sense of emptiness was oppressive. There was not a living thing between us and the horizon — not a plant, not a withered stalk, not an insect. That is the character of the country for hundreds of miles — the desert of deserts, the Tanezruft.

Our cars plunged ahead at full speed as if we were on a cement highway. We were constantly seeing most wonderful optical effects, mirages, bits of sky reflected on the distant plain like great blue lakes lapping golden shores. Men, animals, forests, houses, hovered a moment in the distant shimmering heat-haze and vanished as suddenly as they appeared. A stream seemed to lie ahead of us — silent water, motionless, scintillating like quicksilver. But

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it drew away as we approached, then retreated impalpably to our right and to our left.

The afternoon drew to a close. At 5 P.M. the mirages had long since ceased. The sun prepared to bid us its farewell by flooding the plain with a pale rose-colored glow that covered the landscape like a gauzy veil. Each one of the millions of tiny pebbles sparkled so that the earth seem to be sown with a mosaic of sapphires, diamonds, emeralds, rubies, topazes, and amethysts.

An hour later we turned slowly to the west to stop at Zaouiet Reggan, where a Mohammedan tribe has been camped for centuries at the last palm-grove before the absolute solitude of the south is reached. This religious community lives there for the sole purpose of providing a roof, a handful of dates, and a little water to the rare caravans that pass that way. The Grand Marabout, learning of our expedition, had sent an invitation to Adrar requesting us to visit him.

We arrived in the depth of the night, and had not yet reached the top of the little descent to the palm-grove when we were suddenly greeted by a rifle volley. It gave me a momentary start, but almost immediately torches appeared from all directions and we were surrounded by a crowd of cheering, dancing, shouting people. Our chauffeurs had to stop quickly to avoid an accident. When we turned our headlights on the approaching crowd the effect was fantastic. Tall black men clad in white robes stood out in sharp relief in the glare, running, leaping, stopping at times to indulge in strange contortions, like a band of demons dancing in and out of the surrounding darkness.

A moment later the Grand Marabout himself appeared, advancing slowly with great dignity, surrounded by his officials. He was a handsome bronzed old man with a long white beard, gentle eyes, and majestic manners. Distinguishing Marshal Franchet d'Esperey at once, he approached him, bowed three times, extended his right hand to him, and then kissed his hand in the Arab manner. He also spoke a few words of welcome. Thereupon the crowd formed in a long column headed by torches, musicians, and dancers, and we proceeded on foot, followed by our automobiles, to the homes of these hermits.

We were conducted to a little open place by the side of the big adobe residence of the Marabout. Rugs were spread on the sand. Our host seated himself first and invited us to do the same. The Marshal then seated himself with great dignity, followed by the remainder of his party and by the Grand Vizier and several notables. The crowd, having suddenly become silent, likewise ranged itself on the sand in a great circle at a respectful distance, and watched us quietly. Several torches and the headlights of the automobiles illuminated this serio-comic scene.

Up to this moment the Grand Marabout, who was visibly impressed by the presence of the Marshal and doubtless somewhat blinded by the glare of our headlights, had not clearly made out the other members of the party. We were hardly seated, however, when he discerned Madame Delingette, the only lady accompanying the expedition. To see a woman among us, and above all at his table — certainly the first time such a thing had occurred in the ancient Mussulman monk's long lifetime — evidently disturbed him deeply. His concern was immediately communicated to his Grand Vizier, and then to the latter's acolyte. There was a moment of embarrassment, during which a few

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words were exchanged in an undertone. Just as the faces of our hosts were gradually resuming their normal expression of dignified composure, another incident occurred. Madame Delingette rose, for some trifling reason, and it suddenly appeared that she was wearing knickerbockers. That was too much. An expression of indignant disapproval swept over the countenance of the Grand Marabout. He made some solemn remark to the Grand Vizier, who repeated it to his acolyte. An arctic chill seemed to settle over us, even here in the hot Sahara. I do not know what saved the situation, just when we imagined it was desperate. Probably the prestige of the Marshal was stronger than the scandal of the knickers. Anyway, faces gradually became serene again, rosaries were pulled out, and we saw the lips of these pious men praying for forgiveness to Allah.

Servants began to pass around the food. First we had dates, and then millet mush. There were also little eggs, boiled hard, which the Grand Marabout shelled with his own fingers and ceremoniously offered to his guests. We bowed deeply as we received them, and swallowed them, finger-marks and all. A sheep that had been presented to us alive on our arrival then appeared roasted whole. Each one tore off pieces for himself. The Grand Vizier personally made peppermint tea, according to the custom, and each of us drank the three traditional cups. After that a bottle of camel's milk was passed around the party. The Marabout drank first, directly from the bottle, followed by the Marshal, and the rest of us in turn.

This dinner was a long-drawn-out affair, and except for the Marshal, under whom a thoughtful chauffeur had shoved an automobile cushion, we felt dreadfully cramped from sitting so long in the Arab fashion. After it was all over the Grand Marabout made a gesture. The people dispersed in silence; then he left last of all.

We slept where we were in the warm sand under the great palm trees, caressed by a light, cool, wonderfully refreshing breeze.

At 4 A.M. on November 19 we left Zaouiet Reggan. As soon as the sun rose we found ourselves again on the boundless *Reg* — the same land of death we had traversed the day before. A few torpid, sticky flies that we brought with us from the oasis disappeared one by one, carried away by the wind, and left us alone, mere specks in the infinite.

Our chauffeurs drove as rapidly as the temperature of our water and our oil allowed. Our cars were six-wheeled, ten-horsepower Renaults, built for negotiating difficult country; but a forty-horsepower car picked up at hazard in the Champs Elysées would have carried us across the flat Tanezruft, where there was nothing to prevent running at any speed. The compass of the horizon in the Reg is immense — wider than on the ocean, where the almost imperceptible undulation of the billows breaks the line of vision. We drove ahead on the diameter of a perpetual circle so unvarying, so unchanging and obsessing, that we seemed to be making no progress whatsoever. We felt as if the ground were running under the wheels, or a bizarre sensation of being on a moving carpet, as though the earth were rotating under us while we remained fixed at the same point in space.

About every three hours Gaston Gradis would order a halt. We would get out and stretch ourselves, talk a little, and eat a mouthful. Some of our party wanted to wash and even to shave. That was forbidden except for

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the Marshal, who dolled up daily. It was forbidden because water was rationed. We could not even approach the tanks that fairly boiled under the blazing sun in the backs of our hot cars without attracting sharp, suspicious glances from our leader. 'Kerilles, wash in your Cologne water if you want to wash. That water is to drink.'

'A few drops, just a few drops, for my teeth.'

And the hot, roily, ill-smelling water, heavy with clay and sand, would trickle drop by drop upon my tooth-brush.

Our cars no longer kept in Indian file, but ran side by side across the flat country, the drivers occasionally indulging in a little race and chaffing each other. Fatigue and monotony were getting the better of us. Discipline was relaxed. We were all restless with suppressed anxiety. Two days of the endless Tanezruft and no end yet. When we halted we indulged in horse-play. We laughed, laughed a little too much — the forced laugh that is a first cousin of the fathomless melancholy on the faces of the native desert-dwellers.

Whither were we bound? What was our goal at the end of these terrifying distances? An oasis, laughing palm-groves, mysterious foggaras, limpid waters murmuring through shady alleys? No. Toward one of the broad, shallow, reed-bordered swamps where the caravan camels drink? No. We were going to a well, a well so little that a man might step across it, hidden in the midst of a tract of boulders and a few scraggly thorn-shrubs; a dot of subterranean water, a refuge of life in the desert known only to a few native scouts, a few robber-bands, and a few jackals. And for a hundred miles around it there is nothing but the immensity of the waterless desert!

Compared with the vast extent of the desert this well is hardly larger than the grains of sand that surround it. Were we to make an error of a tenth of a degree in our course we should pass it unawares. To be sure, in our case that would be no serious disaster. We should turn back and circle in a spiral, beginning with a diameter of ten or twenty miles, and gradually close in upon it. Our motor-cars, gorged with gasoline and water, defied such mischances. But I thought of the caravan men who live all their lives in the Sahara, who trudge along under the hot sun, watching the water growing steadily less in their goatskin bags and their exhausted camels drooping thick-lipped heads lower and lower toward the ground. Such travelers are at the mercy of their guide. The slightest human error, the wind-drifted sand changing a familiar contour, spells their doom. As for ourselves, as one of the chauffeurs well said: 'We are fake Saharans.'

Five-thirty P.M. Yonder is Oulahoun. A low, dreary embankment breaks the monotony of the Reg. A gravelly trail leads to its summit. On top is a bordj where twice or thrice a year a detachment of *goumiers*, or native constabulary, arriving from the west by a shorter and better-watered route than our own, makes its brief bivouac. For a few days they watch the surrounding country.

A few big boulders and a little square of pebbles mark the well of Oulahoun in the heart of the Sahara. Thirty native soldiers under a French officer awaited us, ordered thither to greet the Marshal on his arrival. To be sure, they had also another errand — to find two of their comrades lost on patrol duty, who presumably had died of thirst. They knew the bodies must be in the vicinity, for they had found the men's camels slaughtered and with their stomachs open. When a Saharan

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kills his camel and opens it to get a little green water to keep alive, it means that he has come to the end of his tether.

We were also greeted by a native chief, accompanied by two women and a few slaves — formerly one of the boldest and most intractable enemies of the French, who was likewise waiting to pay homage to the Marshal. His scanty escort was due to the conditions of the route, for there was not water enough along the trail to supply a larger party. He was a noble, haughty, impressive-looking man, with a cross-hilted sabre girded at his side. His face was covered with the mysterious *litham*, or blue veil, that the Tuaregs wear, partly as a protection against the sun and sand, but mainly as a defense against evil spirits.

We took up our quarters in the centre of the miserable little bordj. Our automobiles were parked two at either end. With great expedition slaves and servants prepared a meal of roasted mutton and tea — the strange, black, aromatic tea of the desert.

The cadi, who acted as our host, had neither the gracious ways nor the gentleness of bearing that distinguished the Grand Marabout at Zaouiet Reggan. He paid his respects to the Marshal solely by his presence, sitting taciturn, silent, abstracted, and eating and drinking little. Had it not been for the Marshal we should not have heard his voice.

Three of our aviators landed at Oulahoun a short distance from the well and the bordj. It was the first time that airplanes had halted here. They came both to show honor to the Marshal and to test the possibility of joint airplane and automobile communication in the desert. Gustave Gradis dreams of a great triple highway — by rail, by motor, and by air — through Africa from Algeria to the Gulf of Guinea, along the vertical axis of France's mighty empire.

At 7 A.M. on November 20, precisely at sunrise, the three planes rose heavily from the soft sand that impeded their take-off and made a farewell circle at a low elevation around the bordj where we were encamped. Then they sped away toward the North, reversing exactly our path of the day before.

We were allowed to rest the morning following our arrival, and a most grateful respite it was from the steady grind of the journey. When we resumed our course southward we encountered at first the same kind of country we had crossed the previous day, and the wheel-marks of the earlier expedition were still visible. Soon, however, glimpses of sparse vegetation greeted us at intervals — patches of slender, delicate plants, sometimes bearing blossoms, that bent in the wind and formed spots of tender green delightful to our desert-wearied eyes. These plants, the *acheb*, are curiously adapted to their arid habitat. They wait patiently five, ten, fifteen years for the few drops of water that enable them quickly to sprout, blossom, and die, leaving new seed that the winds scatter far and wide across the sand to wait for years until a local shower brings them another brief period of life.

I had settled back in my seat half-asleep, overcome by the heat and the wind, when our driver pointed toward the right, where at intervals of half a mile or more from each other lay little heaps of white. It took us some time to recognize that they were camel bones.

Curiosity made us bend our course a little nearer them. Conceive our horror at discovering also human remains. A dozen skeletons lay scattered on the rose-colored clay at

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considerable distances from each other. We stopped before two of them — a larger and a smaller, possibly of a father and son. They were turned toward the East, toward distant Mecca. One had its hands clasped and its feet crossed, as if its tenant had awaited death in prayer. The other was contorted, recording an agony of suffering.

It was easy to reconstruct the drama. A caravan marching toward Oulahoun had succumbed here on the Tanezruft. We first passed the bones of the few camels that had forged ahead of their thirst-stricken masters. Next came the dozen men who had fallen, one after the other, as their strength successively deserted them. Last of all, at a considerable distance behind, lay the remains of two other camels that had been slaughtered for the water in their stomachs.

Who were these travelers? Merely some of those whom the Arabs call the 'not-come-backs'? They may have been misled by an incompetent guide, or blinded by sandstorms, or fleeing from brigands, or themselves brigands who had ventured too far from the beaten route on some lawless expedition. Or perhaps they owed their fate to the sudden death of a few riding-camels, carried off by the epidemics that occasionally ravage a caravan or poisoned by *falestez*, a deadly plant that gets into their fodder.

To die of thirst — we have abundant testimony of what that means from our own officers and men who have been rescued at the last moment unconscious in the desert. At first, for a day or two before, a nightmare of paralyzing dread; some go mad even at this early stage and throw themselves in fury upon their companions. Then physical suffering — the lips become parched and cracked, the mouth and throat become dry, the tongue swells. Stomach-cramps ensue, and a burning internal fever. Next the face, the hands, the chest, each part of the body, sends its message of dull pain to the brain. This torture slowly rises to a climax, followed by intervals of insensitiveness. The sufferer feels as if his head were being compressed in an iron band. Later violent crises of fever alternate with chills and extreme fatigue. Last of all, the pain subsides, violent spasms cease, lethargy creeps over the limbs. The victims are no longer conscious of thirst. Delirium begins — resembling opium dreams. Men imagine they are surrounded by crowds of people; they hear the voices of friends. It is as if the desert were thronged with those who had come to see them die. Men saved at this last stage are not given water to drink immediately. It is administered to them through moist bandages drop by drop.

That same evening we made another strange find. In February 1924, ten months before our journey, our predecessors had left on their passage, in the midst of the Tanezruft, a big gasoline tank filled with water and hermetically sealed. As our route followed their wheel-marks, we naturally came upon it. But imagine our astonishment to find stretched out beside this tank the dried body of an immense vulture. Lost in the immensity of the desert, where there was not even an insect for company or food, but endowed with a marvelous instinct that we have not yet begun to fathom, this bird knew there was water here. Hither he directed his flight. We could see where he had cast himself upon the tank and attacked it desperately with his beak. The metal bore the marks of his assault; the ground was covered with his feathers where he had beaten himself vainly against it. And he had died the same cruel Saharan death that had overtaken the camel-drivers, seventy miles away.

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MY RUSSIAN IMPRESSIONS

BY KOSTA TODOROV

From *Volia Rossii, November*
(Prague Russian-Language Social-Revolutionary Semimonthly)

It was with a sigh of relief that I left Eastern Prussia. Frankfurters with sauerkraut and the monotonous landscape dotted with German villages got on my nerves. Besides, *Rentenmarks* do escape from one's pocket with extraordinary celerity.

Verzhbolovo, where the sharp-eyed gendarmes of the Tsar used to scrutinize all who entered his Empire, is now part of Lithuania. But you still hear Russian spoken everywhere. Our train dragged at a snail's pace across that little country, and our Russian passengers insisted that the Lithuanians ran their trains so slowly in order to create a magnified impression of the size of their country. In the dining-car I sat at the same table with a Lithuanian who complained: 'We live a phantom life. We sell our natural riches and take no thought for the future of our nation. Look at our forests: they are being ruthlessly destroyed without any replanting. In another fifteen years we shall have eaten up, not our interest, but our capital.'

I looked out the window and saw for myself that the magnificent Lithuanian forests had been sadly ravaged by the axe.

'We sell these forests for a song to the Americans in order to buy bread,' continued my vis-à-vis, 'whereas before the war our country used to raise more grain than she consumed. And it 's all on account of the land question, which ought to be settled once for all. The big estates of the landlords lie fallow because the peasants refuse to till them.' . . .

Next morning we reached the Russian frontier at Sebej. A bombastic 'Greeting to the Proletarians of the West!' adorned the boundary post, and a red flag waved over a roughly made board-structure that stood just beyond. The customs officers searched chiefly for 'seditious literature.' Every scrap of printed paper was taken away from us so as to prevent the bourgeois microbe from infecting Russia. My profession of journalist attracted the attention of a puny Commissar who posed in heroic attitudes in the customs building. What were my impressions of Soviet Russia, he asked in suspicious German. I answered him in Russian, saying that it was difficult to judge the Soviet Republic by a single border-station. Instantly he launched off on his well-memorized rhetoric, the usual rhetoric of a Communist leaflet. I listened to those words of which all are so deadly tired to-day, — imperialism, capitalism, Red Army, world revolution, class struggle, Soviet might, crushing the Mensheviki and the Social-Revolutionaries, — and finally the question I was destined to hear later on from every Communist: 'Do you think the revolution in Germany is really delayed?'

'Revolution in Germany is a pipe dream,' I answered bluntly.

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'No, sir. You utterly fail to understand the German situation,' the Commissar interrupted hastily. 'Revolution is imminent in Germany. The Red soldier will soon plant his banner on the banks of the Rhine and kindle a world conflagration.'

I bowed acquiescence to this categoric assertion, although in my mind I had the picture of Berlin with its shop windows, hotels, large stores, cafés, and bars adorned with portraits of Wilhelm II, the Crown Prince, the other Hohenzollerns, Ludendorff, and '*unser* Hindenburg.'

Russian railway-coaches are as wide and comfortable as ever, and trains depart and arrive punctually on schedule. The melancholy, mystical Russian landscape outside the car windows — forests and plains without end — was covered with deep, pure, bluish snow. One of my fellow passengers had also come from Berlin. Until we reached the Russian frontier, my eyes had feasted on his elegant traveling-suit, his gorgeous cravat, and — when he occasionally removed his gloves — his well-groomed white hands sparkling with costly diamonds. Even his pajamas were of a multicolored silk-fabric that excited a chorus of laudatory comment. His rings, his free-handed way with money, his whole appearance, made us think that, if he were not a prince traveling incognito, he must at least be a great capitalist. What was not my surprise at learning, when we reached the frontier, that he was — a Communist!

And then what a metamorphosis! He was no longer well groomed, or even clean-shaven. A leather coat and boots took the place of his elegant traveling-suit. Under my ironic glance he felt constrained to launch off on a philippic against 'the rotten West.'

'What a joy to be rid of those absurd European fashions!'

I learned further that he was the president of the Government Leather Monopoly and was returning from a business trip abroad. His diamonds were no longer visible. [Since this was written, seven high officials of the Government Leather Monopoly have been sentenced to death by the Soviet Government for malfeasance in office.]

It is not surprising that Moscow makes a favorable impression on foreigners who come to Russia for the first time in their lives and spend only a few days there. Moscow is the drawing-room of the country and is kept in comparatively good order. Provisions and merchandise are plentiful, streets, shops, and theatres are crowded, museums have no lack of visitors; and if you do not see many elegant costumes on the streets, at least the Moscow women are sufficiently protected from the cold. Militiamen, who take the place of the classic *gorodovoi*, direct the traffic with as much assurance as London bobbies. The *likhachi*, or better kind of coachmen, are as splendid as ever; and in the more expensive restaurants people eat things they used to have in the 'good old times' and are served by waiters whom they are expected to call 'citizen' and who call their customers *barin* (master).

All this, however, is merely window-dressing. A nightmare of insecurity weighs upon the great historic city. Poverty is less acute, perhaps, than in the small provincial towns and in the villages; but the very abundance of food in the market stalls shows the growing distress of the peasantry, who are forced to sell their calves, their bread, their chickens, for a nominal price in order to pay their taxes.

I often talked with peasants in Moscow. Every government and public building bears the motto: 'Brotherly union between workers and peasants.'

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I asked one peasant what he thought of it, and he answered me without a moment's hesitation: —

'It 's a new trick. They grind us down, they fleece us, for the sake of factory workers. Nobody hears our voice, while the workers are near the Government and can make themselves heard.'

'But have you not received more land?'

'We have got only what we took ourselves right after the Revolution. The remainder of the big estates was converted into "Soviet People's Farms," which are worse than the old landlords. We pay more than we used to for pasture rights. And the Soviet People's Farms lose money. They are dogs in the manger. Even when crops are good we can barely buy the absolute necessities of life. This year I 've got to sell my calves to get a little salt and to pay my taxes. We have no means of raising draft animals, and we can't really farm without them. We don't live, barin, we just barely breathe.'

'Are you making any purchases in town to-day?'

'Nothing, barin. To buy a pair of shoes I 'd have to give away more than my whole crop. We cannot buy even kerosene, we have to burn lightwood splinters instead. We weave cloth, we make what we need.'

This was the story I heard from every peasant with whom I had an opportunity to talk during my stay in Russia. What does the Government do to help him? The newspapers tell the peasant to change his methods of agriculture. They urge him to buy commercial fertilizer, apparently quite overlooking the fact that he cannot buy even enough salt. They send him a thousand edifying pamphlets, which he never reads.

Let me now turn to the workers; for they are the aristocracy of the Soviet Union — they are the only class which, according to the Constitution, ought to enjoy full civic rights.

An electrician who has been a member of the Communist Party for six years told me: —

'Civic rights? We don't have them. From time to time someone from the local Political Bureau comes to our meetings to read a resolution passed somewhere above. If the gathering does not applaud him wildly and enthusiastically, he begins to abuse us and to accuse us of having Menshevist sympathies. Then, of course, we raise our hands. The resolution is adopted and promulgated as "a free expression of popular will."'

'How about wages?'

'Barely enough to live. Sometimes about one half is paid in warrants that must be discounted fully fifty per cent. Besides, we are required to make "voluntary contributions" for the air fleet or for the German Revolution. Then there is unemployment. They dangle before our eyes projects of electrification; yet they are forced at the same time by business necessity to shut down factories that make electric wire. Yes, comrade, things are badly managed. But say, is what they tell us true, about the condition of working people in Europe being worse still?'

There is, to be sure, the new bourgeoisie, the famous 'nepmen' who are the fruit of the New Economic Policy inaugurated in 1921. A nepman steals, speculates, bribes, 'works' day and night, and makes huge profits. But he too is unhappy. He is in constant terror for his life, because he never knows if he has bribed everybody enough. Any day he may be seized by the GPU — the new Cheka — and sent to distant exile. He is a scapegoat kept ready for sacrifice if serious disaffection arises among workers. He is held responsible for all that goes wrong in the

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plans of the Government. He hardly dares visit the better hotels and restaurants, because they often serve as traps for Government secret agents to spy out people's financial standing. Yet the nepman is the most loyal of all the Soviet citizens. He pays large 'voluntary contributions' out of his secret earnings for all sorts of Communist enterprises. He shouts loudest at open-air demonstrations. Whenever Lenin's name is mentioned he sheds warm tears. All of which does not help him much, because 'political expediency' compels the Government regularly to raid the 'black exchange' at the Kuznetskii Most.

Of course, the nepman's adroitness increases in direct proportion to the persecutions he endures. I am of the opinion that he will eventually emerge victorious from the struggle with the GPU. He and his fellows are 'wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.' Although most of the industries at Moscow belong to the Government, the province is falling more and more into the nepman's hands.

The huge army of Soviet Government employees embraces three classes. The first are nonpartisan specialists, the so-called 'spetsy' of Bolshevist jargon — engineers, doctors, office-managers, left over from the old bureaucratic machine of the Tsars. They all hate the new régime, which they serve merely in order to gain their daily bread. The more important of these receive salaries much higher than those of the Communist leaders. A bank-director may be paid eighty to a hundred chervontsy a month, while the official salary of a Commissar is only twelve chervontsy a month.

The second class are the ordinary Communists who filled the ranks of the Party at the time of its greatest triumphs. These are the noisiest, the stupidest, and most dishonest men in the administration. They creep on their bellies before their superiors, but are arrogant toward the rest of the people. They are also nepmen in disguise, often their names appear at the head of scandalous trials, and in their hearts they think themselves vastly shrewder than the 'real Communists.'

These last form the third group, the élite, the little coterie that governs Russia. They love power, they are often genuine ascetics, they pride themselves on being 'the old guard of Lenin'; and, entrenched in their doctrine, they hate the rest of the world and implicitly believe that they are the few chosen by Providence to reform the universe. Yet they will intrigue against each other and dig artful underground mines in order to tumble down the one who seems to be on top.

Russia's burning question to-day is to reduce the abnormal margin between the prices of agricultural produce and manufactured goods. Kamenev himself has admitted that the price of manufactures increases fivefold between the factory and the consumer. As a result there is a sort of pathological overproduction: stores are stocked with goods that they cannot sell, in spite of the fact that the output of the Russian industries to-day is only thirty per cent what it was before the war.

Only one remedy exists for this evil: a drastic curtailment of industry for a few years, accompanied by an intensive improvement of agriculture and methodical exploitation of Russia's vast natural riches. But such a policy would spell suicide for the Bolsheviki. Without industry there is no proletariat; without a proletariat the Soviet Government is but a fiction. When I put this dilemma up to responsible Communists, one of the more communicative said to me: —

'To curtail industry and strengthen the peasantry would mean putting the

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noose around our own necks. It might be best for Russia, and manufacturing would eventually revive, thanks to a strong agricultural class; but in the meantime we Communists would perish. Yet we are necessary for the triumph of the world's social revolution.'

I had nothing to reply to this. Indeed the last measure of the Government to alleviate the situation was to create a peasants' bank with a capital of forty million gold rubles. At the same time, however, the Government's credits to the industries that have a deficit, but are indispensable to the Soviet régime, amount to more than seven hundred million rubles gold, half of which is sure to be a total loss.

It is true, the chervonets has been kept near its par value in gold; but there are too few chervontsy to be had. Meantime the paper currency that the masses are forced to use continues to depreciate.

A Russian educated class exists as a class no longer. Its last representatives, except those who wander homelessly around the globe, bend their backs under the Communist whip. I have met several of them in Moscow — my old friends in quest of a chance to earn their daily bread.

They cannot be accused of subserviency. They did their best to resist. Thousands sacrificed their lives. Prisons are still full of them. But they are vanquished — it is not the first time in history that those who are right have been defeated.

One cold morning, on the Square before the Great Theatre, I met one of those representatives of Russian idealism. Under the Tsar he suffered twelve years of penal servitude for his political activities. Now he is a teacher of languages and the author of books whose publication is prohibited — also a petty official in a Government department. He said to me: —

'Bolshevism — what a pitiful caricature of our youthful dreams! Do you know that in the beginning I myself became a Communist and held important posts? After a time I threw my resignation into their faces. My conscience is now at peace — but I am no longer a citizen. I am no more important than a stray dog. Under the Tsar I was sent to penal servitude, but I was a human being. The gendarme hesitated to say "thou" to me. The prison warden tormented me, but he also honored me in the bottom of his heart. Now if a petty GPU agent kills me in the street he will get nothing but thanks.'

I was especially interested in hearing the opinion of officers and soldiers of the Red Army. One soldier said to me: —

'I am satisfied. They go hungry in the villages, while we soldiers are fed and clothed. Military drill is easier than field labor. So long as there is no war, we are all right, but as soon as war comes I 'll be the first to run away. They keep telling us that we must liberate the European proletariat. I spit on the European proletariat. Let them liberate themselves. The thing that 's really hard on one is punitive expeditions against peasants. It is not dangerous, but it means fighting against your own kin. But then, service is service.'

An officer, a member of the Communist Party, talked in a different vein: —

'We burn with impatience to measure our strength with the imperialist armies. We are ready for any emergency. We 'll soon pay them in full for all they did. Our infantry is wonderful, our cavalry excellent, our artillery splendid. We shall soon have the second best airfleet in the world. Our chemists are preparing new explosives and powerful new poison-gases.'

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But another officer, who used to serve in the old army, said to me sadly: —

'What sort of an army is ours? They manufacture commanders of divisions and corps, and even field-marshals, who are chiefly required to pass examinations in political science. The infantry is well armed. We have a machine-gun and automatic rifles in each platoon. But our artillery is badly organized. During the last manœuvres all the tanks stuck in ditches and the artillery was totally disgraced. The German-built "red airships" are cheap junk. Our airmen have not reached a single European record. Our chemical service is in embryo. As a whole our army is only good enough for parades and punitive expeditions against peasants. Besides, it lacks the greatest thing of all, military spirit. It is a peace-time army. Distance, and not the Red Army, is Russia's chief defense.'

In the meantime everyone who has received a pass to the Kremlin can see a huge map of Germany over the entrance to the Army School. Places where Communists are supposed to be strong are marked on the map and a legend reads: 'Student of the Red Army! Keep careful track of events in Germany. The Red Army is for peace, but it is also ready for war.'

As for foreign policy, those are mistaken who think that it is directed by Chicherin. The Commissariat for Foreign Affairs is a group of several officials, who take their orders from the Political Bureau, which in its turn is under the guidance of the Third International. One of the chief trumps of Soviet diplomacy used to be Turkey, which borrowed extensively from the shallow treasury at Moscow and then turned against the Soviets. For several months the fata morgana of a German revolution lulled the Bolsheviki to sweet slumber. All the money reserves that the Third International at Moscow could command were sent to support the German Communists. The Soviet press reported step by step the progress of the German revolution. The dying Lenin alone, so I was told, refused to believe these tales. Every day his disciples asked him the same question, and every time he answered them, writing with his feeble hand on his pad of paper: 'Read Bakunin.'

It is well known that Bakunin despised the Germans and considered them totally unable to make a revolution.

'Our strong card,' a department chief in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs said to me, 'is the nationality question. We have decided to exploit national rivalries for the benefit of Communism. Every national-minority movement may count on Moscow's support, in spite of the bad example of Angora, which has nauseated the whole world by its ingratitude. At the present moment we stake a good deal on the Macedonian Comitadji, even though they kill Bulgarian Communists; as well as on Radič and his Horvats and on the Catalonian separatists.'

'And how about your own national minorities?'

'We assume that this question is decided, but as a matter of fact it was never more troublesome. The whole trick consists in intensifying national hatreds and then playing the arbiter and making people forget the burning economic questions of the day. Thus the Ural Cossacks — a strong, robust, and intelligent people — are subordinated to the backward Bashkirs, a nomadic race, with whom they are to form one Bashkir Republic. Clearly, the Cossacks are indignant, and their struggle with the Bashkirs will divert their energies from a struggle against Soviets.'

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FRESH LIGHT ON THE SERAJEVO CRIME[1]

BY MARY EDITH DURHAM

From the *Contemporary Review, January*
(London Liberal Monthly)

[We have already referred editorially to the alleged disclosures described in the following article. Miss Durham is an artist, author, and lecturer of repute, a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and Honorable Secretary of the Anglo-Albanian Society. During the last twenty years she has published five books dealing with Balkan questions.]

On June 28, ten years had passed since the crime which precipitated the most terrible war that the world has known. The immediate cause of the war was the fact that the Serbian Government refused to permit the origins of the crime to be inquired into by Austrian agents, upon Serbian territory. To the few of us who had lived long in Balkan lands, and had heard 'our next war with Austria' loudly discussed both by Montenegrins and Serbs, there was no possible doubt as to why Serbia refused to permit this inquiry. We had even been told, 'We have the whole of the Russian army behind us, and *you* (England) can do nothing!' Little did we then dream that instead of 'doing nothing' England would ultimately be dragged in to support the plan.

At the time of the crime Serbia was, to the general public, a practically unknown land. Though it should have been common knowledge that the history of Serbia was punctuated with political murders; though the Carnegie Report of the Balkan wars of 1912–13 had amply exposed the atrocities of the organized gang of Serbian military, known as the Black Hand; though, in short, there was sufficient reason for doubting Serbia, yet, at this critical moment, she was taken at her own valuation. Great Britain was represented in Belgrade by a newly appointed Minister, who had had no possible time in which to fathom the depths of Serbian intrigue, and at the critical moment he was absent from Belgrade. The Chargé d'Affaires who replaced him was also new to the land. Serbia shouted her innocence. 'Therefore,' cried a band of enthusiasts, 'she must be innocent.' Viscount Grey, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, had had no Balkan experience whatever. The Serb mentality was a sealed book to him.

Those of us who had lived long in the Balkans asked in vain: 'How is it possible that in a land riddled with police spies, where the simple tourist in pre-war days was asked for a passport in every village, dogged by the police, could not photograph a cow or speak to an old woman without the police noting the fact and wanting to know the reason — how is it possible that in such a land this ubiquitous police-force has been totally unable in three weeks to throw any light on the crime?' *Between June 28 and July 23 not an arrest*

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was made; not an explanation given. Slavko Gruitch, when asked by Freiherr von Storck, on behalf of the Austrian Government, what steps the Serbian police had taken or were taking to trace the crime, merely replied: 'The police have not concerned themselves with the affair.'

When Austria, her patience worn out by Serb indifference, insisted that Austrian officials should take part in a search for the criminals, Serbia preferred to risk war rather than to risk the exposure that must necessarily follow. We could only conclude that the exposure would have been a very bad one. The innocent would cry: 'Open all my cupboards and see how clean they are.' From this belief we have never swerved. And the evidence which bit by bit has been piling up has only confirmed it.

It is now possible to show that Austria's suspicions were correct and her demands justified. Had Europe enforced such an inquiry *on the spot* — as was made recently in Greece, also in a murder case — the history of the past few years would have been very different.

Last year, Professor Stanoje Stanojevič, of Belgrade, published for the first time the fact that the Archduke's murder was organized by Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijevič, Head of the Intelligence Section of the Serbian General Staff at Belgrade, after a communication received by him from the Russian Intelligence Department. Dimitrijevič was the leading spirit of the 'Black Hand,' a society the main object of which was the break-up of Austria-Hungary. He took an active part in the murder of King Alexander and Queen Draga in 1903. As England resumed diplomatic relations with Serbia on condition that the murderers should be dismissed from office, we may fairly ask how he came to be appointed to such an important post as Head of the Intelligence.

Stanojevič's argument is that, the crime being the work of a 'secret society,' the Government could in no way be held responsible. He fails to recognize that a Government which permits the existence of such a notorious society and fails to punish its crimes becomes at best an accessory. Dimitrijevič employed as his right-hand man Major Voja Tankosič, says Stanojevič, thus confirming the truth of Austria's accusation. He tells much, but he leaves untouched the question, Had the Serbian Government, or any members of it, any previous knowledge of the plot?

'Murder will out.' The veil that covered the days between June 28 and July 23, 1914, is now lifted by the Serbs themselves. To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the World War, a book of short articles by leading Serbians has been published at Belgrade under the title *Krv Slovenstva* (Slav Blood). It tells almost all we want to know. The first article is 'After Vidovdan, 1914,' by Ljuba Jovanovič, President of the Serbian Parliament. We will quote it freely, italicizing the more important passages.

> The outbreak of the war found me Minister of Education in the Cabinet of M. Pashič. I have written some of my thoughts and impressions of those days. From these for this occasion I now make extracts, *for the time has not yet come for publishing all.* [The extracts, we may remark, are sufficiently strong for a first dose.] I do not remember if it was the end of May or the beginning of June when, one day, *M. Pashič told us that certain persons were preparing to go to Serajevo, in order to kill Franz Ferdinand,* who was expected there on Vidovdan. He told this much to us others, but he acted further in the affair only with Stojan Protič, then Minister of the Interior. As they told me afterward, this was prepared by a society of secretly organized men,

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and by the societies of patriotic students of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Belgrade. M. Pashič and we others said (and Stojan Protič agreed) that he, Stojan, should order the authorities on the Drin frontier to prevent the crossing of the youths who had left Belgrade for the purpose. *But these frontier authorities were themselves members of the organization and did not execute Stojan's order*, and told him, and he afterward told us, that the order had come too late, for the youths had already crossed over. *Thus failed the Government attempt to prevent the outrage (atentat) that had been prepared.*

It is thus clear that the whole Cabinet knew of the plot some time before the murder took place; that the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior knew in which societies it had been prepared; that the frontier guard was deeply implicated, and working under the orders of those who were arranging the crime.

One order, which was disobeyed, was the sole effort made by the Government to stop the course of events. Had Pashič and his Cabinet wished to prevent the murder it is obvious that their first steps would have been at once to inform the Vienna Government and the police of Serajevo, giving the names of the criminals, which it is clear they knew; to arrest and try the frontier guards; to make searching inquiry into the incriminated secret societies and arrest all suspected accomplices of the plotters. A few hours' energetic work would have stopped the affair. But Ljuba Jovanovič's reminiscences tell of no such steps. We can only suppose that Pashič and Protič had no wish to stop it. Ljuba then remarks: —

There failed also the attempt of our Minister at Vienna, *made on his own initiative*, to the Minister Bilinski, to turn the Archduke from the fatal path which had been planned. Thus the death of the Archduke was accomplished in circumstances more *awful than had been foreseen*, and with consequences no one could have even dreamed of.

It has been claimed by certain defenders of the Serbs, notably by the French author, M. Denis, that the Serb Government warned the Austrian Government and thereby freed itself from responsibility. Ljuba Jovanovič makes it clear that no official warning was given. The Minister acted 'on his own initiative.' We are left to imagine whence he derived his information. He makes yet one more of the Serb officials who knew of the plot.

As Minister of Education, Ljuba came in contact with the numerous 'emigrant' students from the Slav provinces of Austria-Hungary. From one of the students, who was a refugee in London during the war, and from other sources, we have learned that these 'emigrants' were mainly boys who had been expelled from Austrian schools for grave breaches of discipline. They were welcomed in Belgrade, where their schooling was often paid for by the various patriotic societies, or by individuals, and used to meet at the eating-house in Belgrade known as the 'Green Garland,' where a violent anti-Austrian propaganda was carried on by the 'Black Hand,' ex-*komitadji* leaders and officers. Ljuba tells us that he was personally acquainted with Princip, the chief murderer, and that he encouraged him and his fellows to complete the classes in the school in order to be the better prepared 'to be of value to the nation and in general *the better serve their ideals*.' That he was unaware of what went on in the 'patriotic Bosnian and Herzegovinian circles' in Belgrade is in the highest degree improbable. The ugliest feature of an ugly tale is the fact that these men in official positions, deliberately and in cold blood, incited a pack of raw youths to commit crimes that must at least entail the death of the criminal, and sat calmly by and watched results. The refugee student above quoted stated that Princip was

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chosen because he was in such an advanced state of tuberculosis that he could not in any case have lived long. 'I saw him in the park just before he left, and he looked very ill.' Ljuba, after describing Princip, continues: —

On Vidovdan [Sunday, June 28, 1914] in the afternoon I was at my country house at Senjak. About 5 P.M. an official telephoned to me from the Press Bureau telling what had happened at Serajevo. *And although I knew what was being prepared there,* yet, as I held the receiver, it was as though someone had unexpectedly dealt me a heavy blow. When later the news was confirmed from other quarters a heavy anxiety oppressed me. . . . I saw that the position of our Government with regard to other Governments would be very difficult, far worse than after May 29, 1903 [the murder of King Alexander]. I feared the European Courts would all feel themselves aimed at by Princip's bullet, and would withdraw from us with the approval of the monarchist and conservative elements. . . . I knew that France, and much less Russia, was not ready to match itself with Germany and her *Danubian ally, for their preparations were not to be complete till 1917.*

He describes his agony of terror. That military circles did not take so gloomy a view appears next: —

Terrible thoughts overwhelmed me from Vidovdan [Sunday] till Tuesday at noon, when a young friend, Major N——, to whom I told my fears, said in beautiful, soft, but truly inspired tones: '*Gospodine* Minister! I think we need not doubt. Let the Austrian-Hungarian Government attack us. It must come sooner or later. Now is an inconvenient moment for settling the account. But *now it is not for us to choose.*' [Why not? Had the Serb military already decided to risk war and not to allow their 'Black Hand' to be interfered with?] If Austria-Hungary chooses it — well, so let it be! It may possibly end badly for us. *But it may be otherwise.*

One can only suppose that by this time the Serb army was already sure of the support of some Power or Powers. Thus cheered by Major N——, Ljuba sat up again, and took notice, with high hopes, that the Russian press was friendly; 'one knew in advance that it represented the Government . . . Russia does not withdraw her hand from us, and after Russia will come her friends. Thus it came about and was.' In this astonishing autobiographical fragment there is no attempt to conceal Serbia's bloodguiltiness. The 'inspired' tones of Major N—— suggest that he knew very well what he was talking about.

Meanwhile, Nikola Pashič and Stojan Protič had not been idle. Their main idea was to conceal all trace of the crime and pose as innocent. Serbia was, indeed, so much accustomed to political murders that it is possible they imagined one more or less did not greatly matter. Ljuba details their efforts with singular simplicity. He seems to take it for granted that no one ever imagined Serbia was innocent, but that the public would like to know how the thing was done.

M. Pashič hoped that somehow we should surmount the crisis, and he — and all of us — strove that Serbia should get through the giving of these unlucky satisfactions to Austria cheaply. . . . *As is well known, the Government did all it could to show our friends and the rest of the world how far apart we were from the Serajevo criminals* (*atentatori*).

Thus Stojan, on the very same evening when the news came of what Princip had done, gave orders, and the Belgrade police forbade all pipe-playing, singing, and rejoicing in public places, and all was stopped, and something like official mourning began.

When Mass was celebrated in the Catholic Church of the Legation on June 20 at the time of the funeral of the deceased Archduke and his wife, some of the Ministers represented the Serbian Government. I, too, was among them. I wanted to show that *even I, about whom it might be thought that I approved Princip's deed,* was on the contrary in entire agreement *with what our*

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Cabinet was doing. . . . [Here one asks, 'What was it doing?' And can only reply, 'Shamming mourning and trying to deceive Europe.'] . . . *Nevertheless this short stay in the church was unpleasant to me.* I felt myself to be among enemies who would not make peace with us.

What a picture is this of the man who, knowing of the murder-plot a month beforehand, during which time he does nothing to prevent it, goes to church in pretended mourning for his slaughtered victim and is hard pricked in his conscience; aware that as Minister of Education and as a leading light in the *Narodna Odbrana*, which inspired the teaching of Young Serbia, he was himself already bloodguilty, would have the blood of the young criminals also on his head; and terrified lest, at the long last, he might be answerable for yet more blood. Autobiography has seldom produced a more vivid snapshot. Ljuba Jovanovič's colleagues, however, were less sensitive.

They still thought war could be avoided . . . they would give satisfaction to Austria, *and postpone the conflict till the time when we were again ready for war, from which we had emerged with glory and great gain last autumn.*

To those who do not know the Near East it must be explained that the death of the Archduke was but the last of a series of political murders upon Austrian territory, committed by youths whom Austria had every reason to believe had been armed and incited in Serbia. In all these cases, Austria had refrained from pressing the point and had limited her action to protests. It had come to such a point that Austria's cowardice, as both Serb and Montenegrin believed it to be, was a byword. 'You *can do what you like to Austria. She dare not fight!*' was remarked contemptuously as each fresh outrage was duly applauded in the Serbian press.

Pashič and Protič continued their efforts to make things safe. Says Ljuba: —

When the news came from Vienna that an employee of the Serbian Ministry of Works, Milan Ciganovič, had helped the criminals to go to Serajevo, M. Pashič asked Jotza Jovanovič, who held that office then, what this employee of his was. M. Jotza did not know him, nor did anyone in the Ministry. [This is strange, for Ciganovič was a member of the 'Black Hand,' said to be known as Number 412, and in fulfilling its orders must, with or without leave, have been frequently absent from his post.] *As M. Pashič insisted, they found Ciganovič after some trouble,* in some administrative post on the railway. I remember that someone — Stojan or Pashič — said, when Jotza told us this: 'There you are! You see it is just what folks say. If a mother loses her son, let her look for him in the railway service!' After this we heard from M. Jotza that Ciganovič *had disappeared somewhere out of Belgrade.*

This is a very important admission. It shows that the Government could, had they chosen, have arrested Ciganovič. He had been accused by the murderers, in their confessions, of being the man who introduced them to Major Voja Tankosič and, by his orders, gave them lessons in pistol-shooting and bomb-throwing, Tankosič supplying the pistol. Ciganovič, they said, also furnished them with four Browning pistols, six bombs, enough ammunition, and a tube of prussic acid with which to commit suicide after the deed and so preserve the secret. He then gave them a letter to Major Radé Popovič at Shabatz, who arranged with the frontier guard for the safe passage of the youths and their weapons into Bosnia. For these very sufficient reasons Austria demanded the arrest of Ciganovič. The Serbian Government replied that Ciganovič had left Belgrade on June 15 (O.S.) and could not be traced. The Austrian inquiry was made some three

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days after the crime. Ljuba shows that Ciganovič was then still in Government employ and that it took a little time to find him. He was not arrested, but mysteriously 'disappeared.' It was clear to Austria that, unless her own agents acted, no arrests were likely to be made. By conniving at the escape of Ciganovič the Cabinet became accomplices after the crime as well as guilty of foreknowledge of it. Austria's insistence on taking part in the inquiries raised an outcry among those who did not know the Balkans. To those who did, it seemed the one necessary clause.

Ljuba continues: —

> Stojan for his part carried out a certain investigation. Among the things remaining in the post office at Belgrade, a post card was found, *poste restante*, written from Serajevo by one of the criminals, before Vidovdan, to one of his comrades in Belgrade.

Here follows a long row of — — — —, suggesting that one of the passages which are not yet ripe for publication is here omitted. Here was yet another opportunity for the arrest of one of the accomplices. Needless to say, nothing was done. On the contrary, Ljuba says cheerfully: 'On the whole it could be expected that Vienna would not succeed in proving any connection between official Serbia and the event on the Miljacka.' The Cabinet then seems to have felt all was safe and to have awaited events happily.

Space does not admit of quoting more of the article. The carelessness with which Pashič and most of the Ministers went up country electioneering, after having, as they thought, safely buried all tracks; the anxious cry by telephone of M. Patchu, the Minister of Finance, who was left in charge, telling that the Austrian Note is about to arrive and begging Pashič to return; his reply, 'Take it yourself,' and his obstinate persistence in starting for Saloniki; his final detention at Leskovatz by an urgent message from Gruitch telling the contents of the Note, are all detailed. He returned. The shuffling reply was drafted in which all points of little importance were conceded but in which the guilty gang refused to allow any dangerous inquiries to be made in Serbia. The Russian Chargé d'Affaires was summoned, and begged to ask for the support of the Russian Government for Serbia. It is all an ugly tale.

One thing is clear after Ljuba's revelations, and that is that an inquiry at The Hague would have been a mere pantomime, staged by Pashič and Co. with, perhaps, some distinguished members of the 'Black Hand' to act as chorus.

It is melancholy now to read the criticisms then made in England on these events. Austria relied on the righteousness of her cause, and supplied each of the Powers with a very detailed *dossier* of her charges against Serbia and the evidence obtained from the captured murderers. But in the Bluebook published at the beginning of the war this is condensed into a few lines. And there is nothing in the Bluebook to show that the dossier was ever seriously considered. We find Sir Edward Grey (as he then was) writing on July 24 to Sir Maurice de Bunsen at Vienna that 'the merits of the dispute between Austria and Serbia were not the concern of H.M. Government.' And on July 29: 'The Austrian Ambassador told me to-day he had a long memorandum which he said gave an account of the conduct of Servia to Austria and an explanation of how necessary the Austrian action was. *I said I did not wish to discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Servia.*'

This was what Germany wished — that the question should be left to be settled between the two. But Sir Ed-

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ward felt himself so tightly bound to Russia and France, whose protégé Serbia was, that we find him writing to Mr. Crackanthorpe, at Belgrade, on July 24 that he thinks

> Serbia should promise to give Austria full satisfaction if it is proved that Serbian officials were accomplices in the murder of the Archduke, and 'she certainly should express regret and concern.' For the rest, the Serbian Government must reply to Austrian demands as they consider best for Serbian interests. [Was it probable they would not?] It is impossible to say if military action by Austria can be avoided by anything but unconditional acceptance of her terms. . . . Only chance appears to be avoiding absolute refusal and replying favorably on as many points as the time-limit allows. Serbian Minister here has begged H.M. Government will express their views, but *I cannot undertake the responsibility of saying more than I have said above*, and I do not like to say even that *without knowing what is being said by the French and Russian Governments. You should therefore consult your French and Russian colleagues as to repeating what my views are as expressed above.*

To this Mr. Crackanthorpe replies that, his French and Russian colleagues having received no instructions, he has not offered the advice to the Serbian Government. Thus, for fear of upsetting France and Russia, it appears that Great Britain dared not even tell the Serbs to say they were sorry.

It is melancholy, too, to turn to the reflections of others who also did not know the Balkans and judged the Serbs by the standards, it would appear, of Oxford and Eton. Thus the anonymous author of 'Who Provoked the War?' in Volume I of *New Europe*, says: 'The Serbian Government denied the indictments of Austria, but no time was left for Serbia to conduct a regular trial of the persons denounced by Austria-Hungary.' But, as we have seen, the said Government had had time to suppress the incriminating post card, to cause the disappearance of Ciganovič, and plenty of time to punish the frontier guards had they chosen. (Ciganovič, by the way, is not reported to be dead, and may yet favor us with his reminiscences.)

The only report we have been able to find on the Austrian dossier is written by Sir Charles Oman, who it is clear has had no Balkan experience, and ascribes Western standards to Near-Eastern minds. He thinks that the evidence given by the captured murderers is probably 'concocted,' because he is haunted by the idea that schoolboys do not 'tell' on each other. He is indignant that Austria should pass over 'the full and satisfactory promise of the Serbian Government to bring to trial anyone accused of complicity in the Serajevo crime' without a word. But a lecture in a haughty tone is delivered on the objection that Austrian delegates in the inquiry would be contrary to the Serbian Constitution. He is deeply shocked that Austria should add, '*If the researches had been properly carried out the results would have been of a kind unpleasant to themselves* (the Serb Government).' So indeed they would have been, for the Cabinet, the Head of the Intelligence Section of the General Staff, the Executive Committee of the 'Black Hand,' the officers of the frontier guard, and who knows how many more, might have appeared as prisoners at the bar accused of complicity either before or after the crime. Sir Charles's indignation culminates when 'it is alleged that the Prefect of Police caused his (Ciganovič's) disappearance, and could have found him if he pleased. *In short, there is a blank accusation of bad faith made against the Serbian Government.*' Compared with Ljuba's picture of Jotza finding Ciganovič, Pashič and Stojan joking about lost youths found in the railway service, and Stojan's remark later that he

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had 'disappeared somewhere,' the difference between the real and the imaginary would be ludicrous, were it not that failure to realize that Austria knew what she was talking about caused Europe to be drenched with blood and cost millions of innocent lives.

'Yes,' said a Serb refugee student calmly, 'it is a pity so many were killed. But you see, the plan was quite successful. We have made Great Serbia.' As it is always of interest to 'see ourselves as others see us,' two more Serbian remarks may be added. '*We made you break up Austria and Germany for us.* Now nothing stands in the way. The Slavonic plans will be realized. You cannot stop us.' Lastly, 'Oh, you English! You think you are honest, but you are so very, very silly. Anyone can deceive you.'

Deceived we were. It is evident that our course should have been to support Germany in insisting that no other Power should intervene; and give France and Russia plainly to understand that we would on no account fight on behalf of their protégé. France, as we know, had been steadily arming and financing Serbia ever since 1906. Serbia had formed an important element in Russian plans ever since the Serb military gang had murdered King Alexander and put Russia's choice, the Karageorgevič, upon the throne in 1903. There are indeed hints that there was pre-knowledge of the murder-plot in Russia, a report that Artamanov, the Russian military attaché at Belgrade, was informed of it by Dimitrijevič, that he asked for delay while he communicated with Petersburg, and a few days afterward informed the Intelligence Section of the Serb General Staff that, whatever happened, Russia would support Serbia. 'We trembled,' said my informant, 'to the innermost depths of our being at the words of the Russian military attaché, for we knew that now the axe would be laid to the stem of the Austrian Imperial family.' Leopold Mandl makes this statement in the *Neues 8 Uhr Blatt* of July 1, 1924. As he does not name his authority, we note it only as a point which requires further elucidation. The Russian correspondence between Belgrade and Petersburg has not yet been revealed.

Had France known for certain that she would receive no help from England if she went to war on behalf of Serbia it is unlikely that she would have dared to support Russia; and had France accepted the often-repeated entreaty of Germany to join with her in an intervention at Petersburg the matter might yet have been localized. Isvolsky reports Germany's efforts with a chuckle: 'The Minister of Justice has not for one moment admitted the possibility of taking a moderating action at Petersburg. . . . The Minister has refused to agree to the German proposal.' Viscount Grey would not 'discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Serbia.' Isvolsky wanted his war, and he got it.

'Never in history has there been a better outlook for the Serbian nation than has arisen since the outbreak of the war!' cried M. Pashič triumphantly on August 13, 1915 (*Tribuna*, Belgrade, No. 1771). Half Europe rushed to his support. The success of the murder-plot surpassed his wildest expectations. We English, as the Serb remarked, were very, very silly. Let us learn from the past and on no account allow ourselves a second time to be dragged into a plot for Slavonic aggrandizement. But he was kind enough to add that we think ourselves honest. Let us then be honest and admit that Germany was not alone responsible for provoking the war.

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THE IMMORTALS CONVERSE

BY W. R. H. TROWBRIDGE

From the *Cornhill Magazine, February*
(London Literary Monthly)

(Scene: *The Reading-Room of the British Museum. The lights have been extinguished. The readers and the attendants have departed. On the door outside is a notice to the effect that the various departments of the famous Library will be closed for five days, in accordance with the usual half-yearly custom.*)

Webster's Dictionary. I wonder that I 'm still alive! Last holidays I thought that I should never live till these came round again. I am worked to death. It is up and down, up and down, from morning till night. My poor back is broken.

Murray's Dictionary. You are too fat. You should keep down your weight as I do. I never feel tired.

The Dictionary of National Biography. Well, I don't mind the work, though it 's hard enough in all conscience. What I complain of is the rudeness with which I am treated. You should hear what I have to put up with. All day long it is 'Why have n't you done this?' 'Where the devil is so-and-so?' 'You are of no more use than the *Britannica*.' It is enough to make a saint swear.

The Bible. That is nothing to what I have to bear. And I have been such a faithful nurse to them! They used to come to me with all their troubles. Time was when nothing was too good for me. It was off to prison with anybody who dared to treat me with disrespect. Now that is all changed. They say anything they please to me now and nobody pays the least attention. I am treated as if I were a pariah. They say they intend to reform me, whatever that means.

(*While they complain, the authors descend from their works on the shelves.*)

Shakespeare. What are the servants grumbling about?

Voltaire. Of the way the readers treat them. It is scandalous. *Écrasez l'infâme!* I say.

Shakespeare. My dear Voltaire, you are so impetuous. Save your indignation for something worth while. As if it were of the least consequence how *they* are treated.

Voltaire. Poor things! Think of the public they have to serve. In my day one's readers were at least educated.

Shakespeare. Well, I have nothing to complain of on that score. I am always treated with the greatest consideration. Scarce a day passes but I receive some flattering compliment.

Voltaire. Speak for yourself. It is only lip service that I get nowadays.

Ouida. That 's better than to be totally neglected as I am. Yesterday I found a worm devouring my *Ariadne*.

Mark Twain (*jocosely*). Gee! I wish the bookworms would devour me.

Ouida (*sarcastically*). And to think people once actually thought *you* funny!

Mark Twain. So I was, Ouid.

Ouida. *Paysan!*

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MARK TWAIN. All the same, I was as popular as you.

OUIDA. Faugh! As if it were a privilege to be cheered by people you would never permit to bow to you.

WILKIE COLLINS. Well, well, Ouida, what are you fretting about now?

OUIDA. Oh, Wilkie, I am so lonely. Nobody ever comes to see me any more, and my neighbors are only old fogies, like Maria Edgeworth and Harriet Martineau. I am dying of ennui. I have one foot in the grave already.

THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY (*aside to* LAROUSSE). If she knew what I hear them say of her, she would die and be done with it.

WILKIE COLLINS. I am dying too, if that 's any consolation to you. We all come to that in the end.

OUIDA. But it is so hard to die when you have such a hold on life as I have.

WILKIE COLLINS. That 's what we all think. I 've got the making of half a dozen reputations in me yet. They were always trying to rob me, but they don't even do that any more.

CHARLES READE. Thank God, I am proof against burglars.

OUIDA. So am I. It never occurred to me before. It is some comfort.

AUGUSTE MAQUET (*following close behind* DUMAS). Why will you persist in refusing to pay me what you owe?

DUMAS. *Va-t'en!* You are the only one of my hundred clerks who has ever given me any trouble.

MAQUET. Clerk, indeed! But for me, I 'd like to know where you 'd be!

DUMAS. You said you were quite satisfied with what I paid you for *Monte Cristo*, *The Three Musketeers*, and the others. What more have you the right to claim?

MAQUET. My name on the title-page.

DUMAS. In collaboration, I suppose. I should have had no objection to it if it would have increased the sales.

MAQUET. No, alone. The plots — everything — were mine.

DUMAS. After I had polished them. That was worth all you did, and more.

MAQUET. I will expose you for a fraud. I will ruin your reputation.

DUMAS. It will take more than a Maquet to do that. When you claim my masterpieces as yours, I have only to summon the rubbish to which I permitted you to attach your name as witnesses to discredit you. *Va-t'en, ingrat!* I am not afraid of you.

MAQUET (*running after him*). Thief! Thief! Stop thief!

AN OBSCURE AUTHOR. How I wish I could have been robbed by Dumas!

SIR WALTER SCOTT. Poor Dumas! We all have troubles of one sort or another.

VICTOR HUGO. There goes a colossus of clay, a Rubens of the inkpot.

OUIDA. I have been called the Rubens of fiction. Who could color a page like me!

D'ANNUNZIO. You were certainly a great colorist. I have always said so.

WILDE. It was from you that I first learned the magic of words, Ouida. There are certain pages of yours that I might have written.

OUIDA. Third Empire days, where are you? After my Italy of a life what a *lendemain de la fête!* (*Moves away sobbing.*)

SHAKESPEARE. Who is that woman, and why is she in such distress?

WILKIE COLLINS. A very brilliant and original Victorian novelist who has fallen on evil times, and does n't want to die.

SHAKESPEARE. Victorian, did you say? Does n't she know that the Victorians, like the Elizabethans, are immortal?

TENNYSON. She should regard dying philosophically, as I do.

MRS. BROWNING. You, Tennyson?

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Why, you have n't been left on Naxos like Ouida.

TENNYSON. What, have n't you heard, my dear lady, that I am quite *démodé?* The public call me a 'back number,' a 'has-been,' in their vigorous, vulgar way.

WILDE. Vulgar, if you like. They have never been anything else since my time.

TENNYSON. Oh, I don't mind their neglect; indeed, it is rather a compliment. But I must confess it is rather galling to hear them say that 'Tennyson is coming into his own again.'

SWINBURNE. I regard their praise and blame with complete indifference. We are like your Brook, Tennyson, for 'men may come and men may go, but we flow on forever.'

TENNYSON. Not so loud, lest you waken Browning.

BROWNING (*murmuring in his sleep*). Dear dead women, with such hair too! What 's become of all the gold?

MRS. BROWNING. Let him dream. His dreams are so beautiful.

WILDE. Why are you so seldom in England any more, Mrs. Browning?

MRS. BROWNING. I have made Italy my home.

WILDE. Ah, England is n't what it was. I pass most of my time between France and Germany.

BYRON. I too live entirely abroad.

GEORGE ELIOT. I have lived in America, since the revolt against culture in England.

WHISTLER. Was it ever cultured? I had to fling a pot of paint in the public's face before it would so much as notice me. I say, Ruskin, what do you think of art now?

RUSKIN. Ye Stones of Venice! Do they dare to call it art?

WHISTLER. Ha! ha! ha! What a grand thing it is to be an Old Master like Rembrandt!

RUSKIN. I would forgive you everything if you would flay those pretentious churls with your rapier wit.

WHISTLER. I should like nothing better than to practise my gentle art of making enemies among the rabble. But, on second thoughts, they are not worth it. Art, like Pan, is dead.

BALZAC. They tell me that the restrictions to personality in modern society would give me no scope for another *Comédie Humaine.*

DICKENS. Cut-and-dried humanity would have no interest for me.

ZOLA. Or you for it, I fear. It is true the force of heredity is not yet atrophied by legislation, but anybody related to the Rougon-Macquart, if not already in a lunatic asylum or prison, is pretty sure sooner or later to be in one or the other.

THACKERAY. Would that I could return to the world! *I* at least should be sure of a welcome.

VICTOR HUGO. Who are those three frail women Taine is paying such attention to? They look like the ghosts of the Fates.

ZOLA. They are the Brontë sisters.

BALZAC. Which is the one that wrote *Wuthering Heights?* I want to talk to her.

ZOLA. The one in the middle. But beware of her. Though you might have written that terrible work, she does not approve of you.

STENDHAL. Good day, Zola. For a moment I mistook you for Flaubert.

ZOLA. The same mud has been flung at us both.

STENDHAL. Detraction has its merits. But tell me, is it true that de Maupassant is Flaubert's son?

MADAME RÉCAMIER (*nervously*). One should never inquire too closely into the relationships of geniuses.

ZOLA. If you wish an example of my theory of heredity, here is one coming this way.

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STENDHAL. What, that woman with the wonderful eyes, smoking a cigar?

ZOLA. Her grandmother was the daughter of Maréchal Saxe and a *coryphée* of the Opera.

STENDHAL. By which token I take her to be a *grande amoureuse*.

ZOLA. *Des plus grandes*. It is her chief claim to fame nowadays. Her life was the greatest of her works. Ah, Madame Sand, *comment vous portez-vous?*

GEORGE SAND. No longer the woman I was. My heart is a cemetery in which I wander.

MADAME RÉCAMIER (*aside*). How morbid! Mine is a *fête champêtre*.

GEORGE SAND. Sandeau, de Musset, and Chopin are buried in it. *Ah, les nuits de Venise!*

ALFRED DE MUSSET (*passing quickly*). *C'est Elle!*

GEORGE SAND. *C'est Lui! Alfred, je t'aime!*

ALFRED DE MUSSET (*without stopping*). Basilisk!

GEORGE SAND. *Il m'insulte!*

JANE AUSTEN (*to* CHARLOTTE BRONTË). There is George Eliot. Shall we speak to her?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. How can you suggest it, Jane? Her life is a subject of scandal. But there can be no harm in watching her as long as we don't talk to her.

JANE AUSTEN. Is n't that rather hypocritical?

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. It does n't seem so to me.

MADAME DE GENLIS (*to* GEORGE ELIOT). What superior airs that English parson's daughter gives herself! How do you tolerate it?

GEORGE ELIOT. She has lived in the backwoods all her life; she knows no better, poor thing. As if there was anything improper in my relation to Mr. Lewes! His children regard me as their mother.

MADAME DE GENLIS. How droll you English are!

GEORGE ELIOT. No, as Sterne would say, you manage these things differently in France.

MADAME DU DEFFAND. My dear Horace, I am making you ridiculous.

HORACE WALPOLE. Marry me, then.

MADAME DU DEFFAND. What, at my age, and blind? That would make *me* ridiculous.

HORACE WALPOLE. It would n't in England.

MADAME DU DEFFAND. No, *mon ami*, if we married how could we continue to write to one another?

HORACE WALPOLE. *C'est vrai.* I only live for your letters.

D'ALEMBERT. Julie, Julie, how could you break my heart?

GUIBERT. And mine, *trompeuse!*

MLLE. DE LESPINASSE (*distractedly*). Forgive, forgive! I love you both devotedly. I tried so hard not to love de Mora too. What a fatality, for a woman to love three men at the same time passionately! It is more than I can bear!

VERLAINE (*drunk*). Where 's that boy with the faun's heart and the wonderful verses who wanted me to show him the way to Parnassus?

ARTHUR RIMBAUD. Damn your Parnassus! Abyssinia is good enough for me. Who said fifty years of Europe were better than a cycle in Cathay lied. Cathay for me! I 've tried it, sans fame, sans verses, sans everything. And now they tell me that *I* have become a poem myself! Why would n't they let me die in Abyssinia? To be forgotten, that 's true happiness.

SAINTE-BEUVE. What, a new type of genius! I thought I had discovered them all.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. Enough, enough! I shall go back to my rectory and ponder over all I have seen and heard.

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JANE AUSTEN. Stay a moment longer. Here comes Madame de Staël. She amuses me.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. Amuses you! That woman with the low code of morals and no belief?

JANE AUSTEN. She is shocking, I grant you. But you forget that in my day such people were quite the rule.

FIELDING (*to* STERNE). What a little Puritan! God, the superior airs these nineteenth-century women give themselves would n't have been tolerated in our day.

STERNE. Is it true, Mrs. Gaskell, that the moral atmosphere of the Brontës' home was the cause of their brother's ruin?

MRS. GASKELL (*huffily*). You surely do not expect *me* to discuss so painful a subject! I would have you remember that I too belong to the nineteenth century.

SHAKESPEARE. I wonder what would have happened to me if I had had the misfortune to have been born under good Queen Victoria instead of the Virgin Queen!

VOLTAIRE. I shudder, my dear Shakespeare, to think!

FORD. Oh, the Elizabethan who strays into modern England is all right, provided he learns the lingo. Ever heard of *Maria Monk?*

GAUTIER. I believe that they have even translated that *jeu d'esprit* of my youth, *Mademoiselle de Maupin.* There 's writing for you, particularly the Preface. I was but a boy when I perpetrated that.

CHODERLOS DE LACLOS (*to* LOUVET). What is wrong with your *Faublas* is that it is too true to life.

ZOLA. That phase which never changes. You called it *Faublas;* I called it *Nana.* The English have a literature on the subject too, in the English style, *bien entendu.*

LOUVET (*to* LACLOS, *admiringly*). Your Marquise de Merteuil is a wonderful creation.

LACLOS. I flatter myself that she is the wickedest woman in fiction. And true to life. A portrait of Madame — let me whisper her name in your ear —

RICHARDSON. I fancy you cribbed your *Liaisons Dangereuses* from me. Had I written in French I should have been called a sewer too by the critics.

(*At the mention of the word 'critics' a shriek of rage bursts from the whole assembly, and even the* ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA *trembles with indignation.*)

AN UNRECOGNIZED NOVELIST. Bah! Who are the critics?

LORD BEACONSFIELD (*cynically*). Those who tried to imitate us and failed.

VOLTAIRE. The *canaille!* They have often felt my lash.

BYRON. And mine.

KEATS. You avenged me nobly.

BYRON. Oh, it was to defend myself as much as aything.

SHELLEY. Come, let us slay them!

MARK TWAIN. You can have my old pea-shooter, if that is of any use to you.

LORD BEACONSFIELD. They have gone where it is futile to follow them.

MRS. SHELLEY. Where is that?

LORD BEACONSFIELD. Into the Newspaper Room.

MARK TWAIN. Then they are buried alive!

LONGFELLOW. Poor creatures, what a horrible fate!

MRS. SHELLEY. It is worse than Frankenstein's.

SHELLEY. All the same, let us dig them up and dissect them. I want to see what a critic's heart is like.

ABBÉ PRÉVOST. *Grâce!* He might still be living like me when they thought me dead.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH. Let us forget them. They can't hurt us any more.

VICTOR HUGO. Yes, that is good ad-

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vice. Besides, they helped to make us famous.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. I have forgiven them.

ANATOLE FRANCE. They are not all bad. There are good critics too, you know.

LORD BEACONSFIELD. Good?

ANATOLE FRANCE. They are those who relate the adventures of the soul among masterpieces.

WATTS-DUNTON (*to* SWINBURNE). Like me, Algernon.

BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE. Why bother about the critics? Love is all that matters.

ABBÉ PRÉVOST. Ah, it is only we of the eighteenth century who know how to love. What man ever loved as des Grieux loved Manon?

MADEMOISELLE AÏSSÉ (*to herself*). Or what woman like me!

LAFCADIO HEARN. There is only one fault with your Paul and Virginia, St. Pierre. Their island should have been Martinique. That is the true *pays d'amour*. I lived there two years. I know.

BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE. Ah, had I but known that Josephine would have made it famous!

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ. I doubt if we knew what love was in the Grand Siècle.

MADAME DE GRIGNAN. *Maman*, what are you saying? Have you forgotten our affection?

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ. As if I could, *ma chérie!*

NINON DE LENCLOS. *Qu'est-ce que tu dis*, madame? *I* not know what love was?

LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE. Or I? Did ever woman give up so much for a man as I did for Lauzun?

SAINT-SIMON. What about La Vallière?

MOLIÈRE. I fancy I knew what true love was.

SAINT-SIMON. Sh! Molière. It is bad enough to marry one's daughter without boasting of it.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNÉ. What a scandal-monger you are, Monsieur le Duc. I am quite afraid of you!

ANTHONY HAMILTON. One has to take what you say with a big grain of salt, Saint-Simon. You should have followed my example. Nobody dreams of questioning me.

MADEMOISELLE DE SCUDÉRY. I wonder what the Pays du Tendre is like nowadays.

A MODERN AUTHOR. Thank God, those ridiculous kings have been banished.

MADEMOISELLE DE SCUDÉRY. Banished? Le Grand Cyrus!

A MODERN AUTHOR. The Pays du Tendre is now a Socialist republic.

MADEMOISELLE DE SCUDÉRY. Pray what sort of a government is that?

ZOLA. A pornographic democracy tempered by ethics.

A VOICE FROM THE NEWSPAPER ROOM. You mean an ethical democracy tempered by pornography.

A MODERN AUTHOR. Whatever you like. But love is no longer worshiped exclusively in the Pays du Tendre.

MADEMOISELLE DE SCUDÉRY. *Quel désert!*

AN UNRECOGNIZED MODERN AUTHOR (*plaintively*). It is not altogether our fault. You have all eaten the country bare. We were obliged to revolt to live. We are starving on Sex and Socialism.

CALVIN. There will have to be another Reformation.

BENVENUTO CELLINI. There will have to be another Renaissance.

ROCHESTER. Long live the Restoration!

MADAME DE MAINTENON. How dull life must be without the kings!

TALLEYRAND. Only those of us who have lived before the Revolution can know how sweet it was.

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MIRABEAU. Certainly one was at least free to express one's personality — provided one had any.

FREDERICK THE GREAT. Even a king.

VOLTAIRE. I once mistook you for Phœbus Apollo!

FREDERICK THE GREAT. And how *you* disillusioned me!

ROUSSEAU (*hysterically*). Tyrant! I do not repent the ill I have said of you. Yet *you* sheltered me when the world was my enemy.

FREDERICK THE GREAT (*with a sigh*). The Philosopher King! How few understand what that means!

CARLYLE. Hail, thou lonely traveler on the frozen Schreckhorn of life!

FREDERICK THE GREAT. What, another flatterer!

CARLYLE. I alone have recognized in you the Able-man, the *Can*-ning man, Nature's king.

FREDERICK THE GREAT. Voltaire, sup with me to-night at Sans Souci.

VOLTAIRE. What, have you some more of your dirty linen for me to wash?

FREDERICK THE GREAT. It will keep your laurels green.

VOLTAIRE. Will nothing pierce that cynicism?

DIDEROT. You should have known my Catherine. There was an empress for you!

GOETHE. Ah, the kings were giants in our day!

MADAME DE STAËL. Mine was an ogre. I shudder to think what would have been my fate had he succeeded in catching me. Oh, those ten years of exile! With what joy I heard of Waterloo!

WAGNER. Talking of kings, was there ever such an one as mine!

EDGAR ALLAN POE. Would that I had had a king! O for the good old days of patronage!

BAUDELAIRE. I was a king to you, Poe. We must be one another's patrons nowadays.

WALT WHITMAN. Think what I had to endure. Perhaps abuse is the best patron after all.

THACKERAY. The public is the best patron.

DICKENS. And the most generous.

BULWER-LYTTON. Hear, hear. Who are those old men quarreling amongst themselves? What a noise they make!

BEAUMARCHAIS. Those are the philosophers; but in spite of their noise they are really dumb. They say nothing, and nobody can understand what they mean.

SHAKESPEARE. Philosophers? It is we who are the philosophers.

MOLIÈRE. The wise men.

A BLIND OLD MINSTREL. The wisest.

MARK TWAIN. Gee! It's good old Homer. Sir, what can we do for you?

HOMER. Follow me, and bring your baggage with you. The immortal gods have sent me to lead you all to the Elysian fields.

(*They depart singing, like soldiers on the march. A bright light illumines their path. Scarcely have they disappeared when others arrive on the scene. The elongated shadows of the vanished figures are still visible.*)

A NEWCOMER (*flushed with publicity*). Down with the aristocrats!

ANOTHER (*pointing to the names blazoned round the dome*). Scott, Byron, Carlyle, Dickens. What are those names doing up there? Let us paint ours in place of them.

ALL. Yes, we 're the masters now.

THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY. More abuse and trouble for me!

(*The light gradually fades. In the dark rats scurry over the floor of the Reading-Room, and worms creep up the shelves into the books.*)

A VOICE (*far off in the distance, singing*). Dear dead women, with such hair too! What's become of all the gold?

ECHO. What's become of all the gold?

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THE GREAT BOAR OF BIRKATHELI[1]

A HUNTING STORY FROM INDIA

From *Blackwood's Magazine, January*
(EDINBURGH LITERARY MONTHLY)

THE Great Boar of Birkatheli had become a tradition — some said a myth — with the hard-riding and not overnumerous folk who formed the X Tent Club. Their country is tucked away in an unfashionable part of India, where the going is vile, and the pig few, fast, and ferocious. It is for this reason that the X Tent Club has never been the vogue, and the hard-bitten few who hunt there hope that it never will be. Still, there is no reason why the world should be done out of the true story of their Great Boar.

The X country has always provided a variety of sport which calls on its men to be prepared to ride anything — boar by preference, of course, but also hyena often, stag very rarely, lynx and wolf as a very rare exception, and panther as a painful necessity sometimes to be faced. For many of the X country beats hold panther.

He is not, however, an animal that often faces the open, but when he does, and when chased by men on horseback with spears, he produces often a marked deterioration among the horses, and sometimes among the riders as well. A tiger has been met in a beat. But he, being not a resident in, but a traveler through, their country, was looked on by the X Tent Club as not on the menu, and was dealt with *à la carte*, being disposed of otherwise than by spear-thrust. I feel positive that they could have taken him on with the spear and made a clean job of him, but they are notoriously averse to notoriety; babblers are ever abroad, and someone might have babbled about it, and the X Tent Club might have become notorious.

Haunting every one, appearing when not wanted, invisible when most desired, truculent, evasive, subtle, the Great Boar of Birkatheli was ever with them — his death their great ambition. He had grown considerably during the last few years, and was now commonly described as being as big as a bull buffalo — that is to say, some eighteen hands high, with tushes certainly not less, and probably a good deal more, than six feet in length. The more sober among the members, however, did not accept these dimensions as strictly accurate, but had no doubt that he was an immense and a terrible boar.

Seen he had been literally by hundreds. He was the talk of the countryside, where he was given to hustling honest cultivators off their fields and mauling them as they fled. These men's voices died in their bellies when they described him. Scores of beaters, who had hurled themselves into thorn bushes to avoid his onslaught, were also able to give detailed descriptions of him. They seemed to have viewed him, measured him, and weighed him with

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the extreme accuracy only possible to people standing upside down in thorn bushes. Lastly, he had been viewed by young spears, out for the first time, and these declared that he was 'absolootly the biggest boar they 'd ever seen,' and this was very likely true.

All this counted for nothing, or next to nothing. The Boar, on such evidence, might well have been several different boars, or even sows, and of any size from that of a mouse upward. But what did establish his existence as a real out-and-outer was the considered evidence of One Who Knew, and he was Dhanni Thakur, Tent Club shikari of over forty years' experience. Dhanni seldom talked, never exaggerated, and possessed legs of such immense size that the sight of them alone inspired confidence. For his were the stoutest pair of Indian-bred legs ever produced on that spindle-shanked Peninsula. And his shoes were of enormous extent, with one great leather tongue reaching halfway up his shin and another halfway up his calf, protecting the vast areas of leg from thorn and spear grass. Now Dhanni, when asked about the Boar, merely replied that he was 'a very heavy one.' But he spoke the word 'very' with a sharp intaking of his breath.

He said nothing more, but it was enough. He never spoke uphill like that for ordinary things. He would make his reply standing with his immense legs slightly apart, his staff hooked across his back in the crook of his elbows — a veritable rock of a man, with a gentle smile and a slow quiet patois. He had never, I believe, been observed to squat native fashion, his large calves and proportionate hams being in strong opposition to this posture.

Asked why the Boar had never yet given anyone a chance, he coughed gently and said nothing. His glance wandered for a moment toward two very young sportsmen, flickered, and then went out. But he said nothing more.

Asked again, more privately, the same question, he named these two young persons gently and said that on two occasions not long previous each had had a chance, each had squandered it, neither had been aware of it; that one of them by an ill-timed movement had put the Boar back; that the other, by composing a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, had failed to see what passed before his very nose. That was what Dhanni implied, but not how he put it. What he said was: 'The Boar walked out from the hill and across the plain, a mile wide. He then passed up the side of Sironja and over the top and disappeared. He passed within two hundred paces of the Sahib, who was alone. We on the hill could see both Boar and Sahib. The latter was looking toward the Boar, but was as one blind or dreaming. We shouted to him, but he took no notice. He was thinking perhaps' — here Dhanni coughed behind the back of his hand and made a slight deferential pause — 'he was thinking perhaps — of a Meem (lady).' This for Dhanni was coming it pretty strong. Scarcely had we credited him with so subtle a knowledge of white men and maidens. But once he had probably gone a-courting himself, and we are told that in these matters color makes no difference.

Rest assured, however, that the lovesick party was roasted to a turn over that business.

But a day came. It usually does, if these traditionally large and evasive boars which haunt every Tent Club periodically are not mere myths.

A party of trustworthy spears, somewhat behind time owing to the lateness of one of their number, were on their way

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to the place where spears were always posted for that particular beat. Not the Birkatheli beat, but one adjoining it. The beaters had begun their booings, and could be faintly heard a mile away. The party was just breaking into a canter to get to its stations, when the flat open ground some way in front of them spewed up an enormous boar. His identity as The Boar was not at that moment realized. One moment the plain was bare, the next the Boar stood on it. He did n't stand long, for he immediately saw how things were. The word 'Ride!' was at once given, but from the first the chase was a hopeless one.

Quarry and pursuers, on converging lines, steered for the same spot on Birkatheli Hill. But it was obvious that the former must reach the hill, and probably be lost on its shaggy slopes, long before the latter could get on terms with him. And this he did, while the horsemen were yet some hundreds of yards behind. On reaching the hill the Boar had immediately disappeared, for here the scrub grew very dense. But by the time his pursuers came storming up to the slope, he could not have reached the top and passed over the crest, or have moved far to a flank in either direction. His movements in either case should have been plainly audible. But there was no sound, and no sight of a boar.

Of the four horsemen, one remained halted, one galloped to either flank, and one put his horse at a less difficult place on the slope, forced him up so far as he could go, and then flung himself off and gained on foot, and remained on, the crest of the hill. The four men were in communication with one another, and none of them could hear or see the Boar. The inference was a satisfactory one. He was lying up and they had ringed him. A little patience and they, would have him moving again. Another party of three spears came up, and beaters with Dhanni at their head were streaming across to help.

On their arrival, Dhanni stood for a moment at the foot of the slope and enunciated four pregnant words, which translated into English make three and a blank, 'This is the ——.' All then knew without further explanation that it was the Birkatheli Boar which lay within the cordon. When Dhanni had gained more breath, his first demand was for medical aid to be sent back to tie up two of his henchmen, whom the Boar had damaged ere he had left the hill and taken to the nullah which had led from the hill into the middle of the plain. It was on emerging from this nullah — quite invisible at a few hundred yards' distance — that he had so suddenly appeared to the belated party of spears.

Operations were at once begun, and hopes were mountains high. It is ill tackling a boar, or anything that bites, from below. So the beaters were sent to the top of the slope, while one party of spears made themselves scarce at the bottom, and the others took post at the top. The hilltop being lavishly supplied with boulders, and some sixty men being now on hand to hurl them, that hundred feet of slope was literally torn with missiles from top to bottom and for a space to right and left of a hundred yards. Nothing hiding there could have endured it — or so it was supposed. After fifteen minutes the barrage was lifted.

Nothing had moved. Yet so convinced was everyone that the Boar must be there, that six spears now left their horses and scrambled along the slope as well as they might, crawling under bushes one moment and climbing over rocks the next. Every inch of the slope was not literally searched, but the six declared (wrongly) that

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there was nothing there. This verdict shook the conviction of everyone else that there was, and each now began to remember instances of boars who had simply vanished, despite the best-drawn cordons. Gradually the conclusion was arrived at that either the brute had gone to earth like a wart hog and then stopped himself in (this was the idea of his original pursuers), or that there had been some bungling which had enabled him to slip away before he was properly picketed (this was the opinion of the other spears), or that there was magic about (this was the opinion of the beaters). Operations were, therefore, broken off, and beating continued in a desultory fashion. There was just a hope that they might still find him, but neither this nor any other boar would have been so accommodating — and so the day ended, blank and bleak.

Thus finished the first hunt in which the Boar had been plainly seen, perfectly recognized, and properly chased.

The damaged beaters had not been merely knocked over by the heedless rush of a startled boar, but had been deliberately stood over, and fearfully, though not fatally, rent by a vindictive fellow. After all, a fellow reputed as big as a buffalo and furnished with tushes not less than six feet long must do something to justify his reputation. The wounded pair were borne away protesting to a regimental hospital. Much would they have preferred cow-dung and mantrums (charms) in their own residences to antiseptics in a clean hospital. To make sure against poison, each demanded that two companions should remain with him, and being of no caste whatever — being indeed swine keepers and eaters — they demanded a special Brahman cook to prepare their food and nobody else's. This to protect them from defilement. Since they bled in the service of the Tent Club, both demands were granted. An attendant charm-merchant had also to be laid on, who spent his time in weaving spells and slaying dozens of black cocks, with sprinklings and incantations. Thanks *solely* to these precautions, and despite a very able doctor's ministrations, the wounded men made a complete recovery, and no doubt later exalted the Boar to the height of an elephant with the tushes of a mammoth.

Dhanni scratched his head over the disappointment. A very long experience had taught him that boars are lost not through magic but through mishandling. But on this occasion he was forced back on magic. He had witnessed the whole hunt from his hilltop, knew the parties concerned were not greenhorns, had noted their tactics on reaching the hill just after the Boar, and approved of every action they took.

Once more the X Tent Club met, and it was the Birkatheli beat. This hill possessed a plateaulike top, perfectly flat and nearly bare, having the appearance, from a little way off, of good going — nice red-brown soil, a pleasure to ride over and fall on if a fall were thinkable here. But on nearer approach the nice red soil turned out to be nice red boulders, lying loose without any earth between them, and so closely packed as to resemble from a distance a well-cultivated upland plain awaiting the oncoming of a rich crop. Yet despite the boulders, horses both could, and often did, travel over them with speed and safety. How I know not, for walking on foot was laborious and ankle-twisting work.

With the beat on top of Birkatheli, on this occasion as often before, rode a party of spears. The hill-crest ended all round in a very abrupt drop or scarp, meeting, a dozen feet below, the steep

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bush and rock-covered slope that ran down to the plain a hundred feet or so below. In some places the scarp was perpendicular, in some it was undercut. It was on these slopes that pig harbored, and it was out of these slopes that the beat was now endeavoring to turn them and to make them leave Birkatheli and pass across some mile of open flat plain to the neighbor-hill Sironja. The party of spears that went with the beat on the top of the former hill were there to take on odd pig that were lying on the plateau and not on its slopes, or pig which happened to prefer running across the plateau rather than across the plain below it. It was always on the plain that most sport was expected.

On that day, and by Dhanni's request, the beaters had been assembled, not at the customary spot near the end of the hill at dawn, but on the night previous at a village two miles away. The beating was also timed to start at an unusually late hour. And there was to be no meet in the usual sense of the word — that is to say, no gathering of the spears and allotment of parties at the usual time-honored tree at a certain road-bifurcation; but these were to ride straight out from cantonments to their stations. In short, everything had been done to defeat the private information-bureau which the Boar undoubtedly maintained to warn him of a meet.

The party that rode with the beat on the hilltop consisted of two men only. Their selection had been a matter of some thought on the part of the Hon. Secretary. Finally, he had selected an old hand and a young one, both well mounted on old proved pig stickers. Of the two men, the old hand was known to have his head screwed on the right way, and as the young one always rode with several spare necks, it did n't so much matter which way his head was screwed on. Thus was secured a combination of two virtues, recklessness and cunning, seldom found in one person. A really first-class goer after hog must have both. He may then hope to be in the final heat for the Kadir Cup, and if Fortune smiles very broadly on him, may win it.

At 11 A.M. the beat moved off, a few men scrambling along the slope of the hill, the majority bombarding it with stones and yells from above. The two spears moved near the crest-line, but a little way back from it.

At 11.10 A.M. the Boar lounged from under his lookout station, an umbrella-shaped tree knee-deep in grass and thorn, which commanded a view in all directions. At this moment the two horsemen were some fifty yards from him, saw him plainly, and at this moment also Dhanni clearly ejaculated three words in Hindustani, which make two and a blank in English — 'That's the ——.' The beaters precipitated themselves like sparks flying from stricken hot iron. The Boar looked at things, but not for long. As the spears made at him, hoping that he would meet this friendly overture, he disappeared over the crest. Two seconds later they arrived also at the crest, and looked down. The Boar could be heard crashing downhill, but between him and them was a twelve-foot perpendicular drop, which even the younger of the two men thought it wiser not to attempt.

No matter for that. If the Boar really meant to quit the hill and make across the open, let him do it unhustled. Meanwhile a rapid search was made for a way down. This was soon found about a hundred yards back. Down they slid and scrambled, feet out of irons, and reached the plain right side up. The Boar could now be seen again, legging it away fast and a thousand yards from them. He had no intention of facing the open, but was bundling along the base of the hill, and looked as

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if he knew exactly where he meant to get to.

Birkatheli is a long hill, three miles from end to end. And the hunt had started close to one end, and was moving fast toward the other. The horsemen had galloped a mile before they had reduced the interval between them and the Boar from a thousand yards to five hundred yards. For a big fellow — and he was very big — he was speedy. The sugar cane had, however, all long been cut and harvested; pig were on a low diet, and kept fit by having to range far to get it. The Boar was evidently in great running fettle, and looked like turning the eastern end of the hill and continuing along its northern skirts, or of holding straight on and making for the intricacies of a typical X country river-bed. One or the other he must do, or be run into. When the two horsemen were within a hundred yards of him, he solved the question by turning sharp into and up the hillside on his left. To be sure, they might have thought of that, but a very heavy, very blown, boar should avoid steep climbing. Within eight seconds his pursuers had reached the spot where he had turned up and disappeared. A glance showed that the slope, though possible to a man on foot, was not so for the stoutest-hearted horse ever foaled. The thorn bushes were too dense and high, and some of the rocks were insurmountable. The spot, although the two men did not realize this in the heat of the moment, was that at which the Boar had been lost, as narrated heretofore, at a former meet.

At once they separated: one dashed forward, the other back, a hundred yards or so, and both kept their eyes on the crest of the slope. Anything to avoid losing touch with the Boar; and this at the present juncture could only be done by eyes or ears. There was not a doubt that he was between them, and had not passed over the crest-line above nor far to right or left. It was now seen that the former alternative was impossible, for the scarp just below the crest was here undercut, and jutting over the crest itself like a bushy eyebrow was an abatis of thorn impenetrable even to the wedge-shaped ram which the boar calls a head. But, as on the former occasion, there was neither sound nor movement.

'Is n't this the place where we lost him before?' called the senior man. But his companion, hat off and hand to ear, was busy listening. He had caught an odd sound, something like that of a faint sawing. He moved back to the spot above which it proceeded. The Boar had turned in just here. The sounds were now much plainer, and came from under the crest, a hundred feet above him. They now sounded more like the breathings of a giant far gone in asthma.

He beckoned up his companion. 'What d'you make of it?' he said. The answer came, 'I make it that the old devil's up there and gone in the wind. That last bust did-in his bellows.' They listened again, and the sounds were convincing.

If a boar is to be taken on on foot, it is best to do so when he is well blown. The two men tumbled off their horses, and running them to a tree, hitched them to it. Spurs were cast off, and then, spear in hand, they attacked the slope, steering by sound, crawling under bushes, climbing over rocks, on hands and knees. At last they came nearly to the foot of the scarp, and paused before a rock about the size and height of an ordinary font. From the other side of the rock came the sounds, very loud, very painful, and very alarming. Their further direct advance was blocked by the rock, but round one side of it wound a little intriguing path

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and disappeared. This path passing between scarp and rock admitted the passage of one person only, and barely that. Both men looked at it — and swallowed.

They were crouched behind the rock and took breath and whispered counsel here. The older man was unhappy, the younger beamed. Both recognized the facts of the case. They were to be slayers of the Boar of Birkatheli, to lay the bogey of the X Tent Club, but they were to do it on foot and in a very nasty place. Between them and him lay this fontlike rock, and round it lay this little intriguing path. The issue was lucidly clear. It was to be either over the rock or round it, and the sooner the better.

But first to have a look over. This was easily done. The rock provided a breastwork, though their right flank could be turned by the path.

Raising themselves, they cautiously peered over the top. The sounds of the roarer, just on the other side of it, had continued and grown no less. They had seen a big boar running from them, and he had looked enormous even then. But what they saw now took their breath away. Within spear-prick of them, not spear-thrust, lying within a slight cavity in the scarp, his huge length sprawled at full extent, lay the vastest boar that ever was. On his side he lay, panting like a dog, roaring like ten horses all gone badly in the wind, and looking every moment larger and more awesome from his négligé posture and extreme proximity to his spectators. So thought they, and they thought wrong. He was to look larger yet and to come nearer.

From above he was, in this his secret lair, perfectly protected both from fire, view, and approach, by the frieze of dense thorns that projected over it. His front was hidden from view and well camouflaged or baffled from even a close scrutiny by the fontlike rock. Alone the little track which he had worn for himself pointed to something being behind the rock. And this his searchers on the previous occasion had overlooked.

The scrutiny was quite a leisurely one. The Boar lay apparently dead to the world, too far gone to take notice of them. There was time to make and unmake two plans and to adopt a third. To leave one spear on guard, while another found his way up and collected men, was dismissed. Nothing could touch him from above. On the former occasion nothing *had* touched him, and the bombardment had been fierce. To pass in by that narrow path, one man at a time, and no room to wield a spear — that plan was gently put aside. The third plan was for one man to boost the other up on to the font, and literally to fall on him with the spear. But the roof of the cavity was so low and so close that even falling on him appeared a doubtful possibility.

Time was passing. The Boar might be foxing. He might stop those terrible noises and come out at them by his little sally-port, or make a dash for liberty down that slope. And down that precipitous slope would he go — some thirty stone of him. Nothing and nobody could stop him. This was a ghastly prospect — to lose the Birkatheli Boar through sheer funk to take him on promptly.

'Give us a leg up,' said the younger man; and next moment he stood on the top of the rock. It was firm and flat, and by leaning forward while the other held him by the slack of his pants he thought he could just reach the Boar so as to prick him. The question was, What would the Boar do when so treated? As no one could reply to that question, the answer had to be elicited by experiment. He leaned, and delivered a faltering dab. Some eighth of an

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inch of the spear-point went home in the thin-skinned, hairless abdominal area.

A lighted match obtruded into a powder-barrel could not have produced speedier results. Really no one would have thought it of such a heaving, utterly blown animal. In a flash the Boar was up, and in another he was on his hind legs with two fore-trotters planted on the rock. His great head made two swift sidelong sweeps, but his tushes met only thin and recently vacated air. He whom they sought was at that moment in space, and wondering what sort of landing he would make. For he had quitted as the Boar gained the rock; but in quitting he had thrust at his assailant's exposed belly, and the spear had gone home. He landed on a decently flat rock, rolled into a bush, and all parties then resumed stations. The matter now appeared perfectly simple. Only show yourself on the rock and the Boar would come again, expose his vital parts, and receive a mortal poke. But he did n't fall in with this plan. Nothing could make him respond. He just lay there, and his two assailants hoped he was petering out. But the Boar had always been a source of disappointments and surprises. He simply would n't come now, and he had a surprise yet in store. One man on the rock and the other below, they discussed him openly and to his face. They peered at him, did everything except take his temperature, or apply a stethoscope. Yet he lay and heaved and looked done-in.

A cold, stark, bleak fact now dawned on them. If the Boar would n't come to them, they must go to him — by the little path and in single file. That was the only possible way. There was some slight wrangling ere the senior man asserted his rights to lead this venture, and the younger gave over the idea of a military funeral when juniors lead their seniors.

So holding his spear short, for there was no room to hold it any other way, the senior squeezed round the rock, and again faced the Boar.

What followed was a blur and a flurry, and can only be outlined in a general sort of way. The Boar may or may not have been petering out, but there was any amount of peter still left to run. In a moment he was on his feet again. A spear-thrust — believed to have been ineffective — was delivered. The spearman turned and fled. The Boar followed. The man could n't go fast enough. The two emerged, with the Boar's forefeet planted one on each shoulder, and their two cheeks laid lovingly together. This only for the space of a moment. The ground did not permit of such endearments. The second man lunged in. None of them could keep his feet, and the trio rolled crashing down the slope.

When they had finished rolling, the Boar was found to be dead, the two men a trifle bruised and thorny, and one of them with his cheek smeared with blood — not his own.

Swiftly they got to horse, for a hot sun and funk had parched them speechless. And they rode in on their companions, who were wondering what had happened to them, but making a hearty breakfast nevertheless. These vain babblers, while the True Heroes drank and regained their speech, poured out their trivial footling tale of six boar killed that day — wretched mice, one of thirty-two and a half inches, one of thirty-one, two of twenty-nine, one still smaller, and one that would probably cost someone a gold mohur. Under ordinary circumstances five ridable pig in one day would have been marked with a red letter in the annals of the X Tent Club, whose total bag for a year seldom exceeded and usually fell short of thirty.

And so when these others had said

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their say, the two paladins gently broke to them the fact that they were late for breakfast because they had had business with the Birkatheli Boar, whom, after a slight affair on foot, they had killed.

Truth compels me to add that this announcement was received with what might have been called shouts of tipsy derision. But the X Tent Club drank nothing but tea. One or two of its more profligate members went in for lime-juice pegs. Drinks were not a common charge. Still the scoffers scoffed. They were, however, invited to come and see, and to bring Dhanni along as corroborative evidence. And when they arrived at the hill and had clambered up fifty feet and saw the Boar lying against a boulder, below a swath of flattened bushes and broken saplings, they allowed that the half of the matter had not been told them.

The dimensions of the Boar and his weight were so great that I dare not give them here. Some faint idea of his size may be gathered when I say that when he was got down on to the plain and laid out reverently (no other word quite meets the case), Dhanni's legs receded from their position as principal features in the landscape, and faded away into mere pipestems.

Two spears were set up at heel and wither, and the Hon. Secretary solemnly placed on record the reading of the tape. The weighing machine utterly failed to rise to the occasion, and this part of the obsequies had to be deferred till another had been procured.

Eight men staggered away with their burden, trussed up to a young tree which had been cut down for the purpose. Eight more relieved them, and so to the road, where a cart was impressed.

His two slayers fell into a brisk argument as to whom the tushes should go to. He who had poked him when the Boar had mounted the font said that it was only a prick, and could not be counted. He who had staggered from the den in that bloody embrace maintained that he had shut both his eyes, had thrust in self-defense, and had probably missed. They agreed that the Boar had actually died of lung trouble rather than spear-thrusts; and the trophies were shared, a tush and a trotter going to each, and the head to the mess, of which each was a member.

All this happened in those far-away times classed as 'pre-war,' and I do not think the X Tent Club will mind the yarn being told now.

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PAGES FROM A COMPOSER'S DIARY

BY PETER ILIICH CHAIKOVSKII

From *Pester Lloyd, January* 1
(BUDAPEST GERMAN-HUNGARIAN DAILY)

February 22, 1886

WHAT a difference there is between the Old and the New Testament! How deep a chasm divides them! Just now I am rereading the Psalms of David, and I cannot understand why they have been so highly valued from an artistic standpoint, or why anyone should think of them as intimately connected with the Gospels. David is of this world through and through. He divides mankind as a whole into two unequal parts: on one hand, the sinners — these constitute the overwhelming majority; on the other, the righteous, at whose head David places himself. Upon the sinners he invokes in every song the vengeance of God. To the righteous he promises reward. But in each case the punishment, like the reward, is of an earthly nature. The sinners shall be uprooted, the righteous shall enjoy all the good things of this world. How different this is from Christ, who prays for His enemies, though promising His followers no earthly satisfaction, but only the Kingdom of Heaven. How deep the poetry, how touching the sympathy with mankind, how much love one finds in the words, 'Come, follow me.'

All the Psalms of David are as nothing in comparison with these simple words.

June 29, 1886

If you read the biographies of our best men or the memoirs of one kind and another that describe them, you come across emotions, impressions, and above all artistic experiences, that you have yourself passed through and that are therefore perfectly comprehensible. There is, however, one who stands alone and inexplicable, unequaled in a greatness that is beyond all other men. This is L. N. Tolstoi. Often, especially if I have been drinking a good deal of alcohol, I feel deep within me a kind of hostility toward him. Indeed, there are times when I almost hate him! I keep thinking to myself: 'This man understands as no other before his time ever understood how to play upon our souls in the highest and most magically harmonious way. Special powers have been given him from on high. He can lead us ordinary men along the most hidden paths and byways of our secret selves. How does it come that such a man has made a mere instructor of himself? How does it come that he has allowed himself to be overcome by a madness for preaching, by a desire to enlighten our understanding — which at best is dark and limited? In his early days, we found in the young Tolstoi something which made a deep and permanent impression, no matter what scene he depicted, no matter even though it might at first glance have appeared simple, banal, or commonplace. Between the lines one could always read the loftiest love for humanity, the most unbounded sympathy with man as he exists — mortal, helpless, trivial.

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It made one weep to read such lines as these. Is it possible to tell why? Yes, one wept simply because what Tolstoi wrote gave one for a moment a glimpse into the world of the ideal, of the absolute good, of humanity.

But nowadays Tolstoi is busying himself with commentaries on the Bible, he is proclaiming his exclusive monopoly upon any understanding of religion and ethics. How cold his writing is getting to be. One feels a kind of pang and dimly begins to realize that Tolstoi, too, is but a man — that is, a creature who, where the problems of God, of being, of religion, are concerned, is just as insanely sure of himself, just as conceited, and with it all just as insignificant, as any little insect that creeps out some warm July morning and by evening has ended its existence.

The earlier Tolstoi was half a God, the present Tolstoi is a priest — and a priest teaches, not from inspiration, but simply as a professional matter. Yet I cannot presume to judge Tolstoi's contemporary doings. Who knows? Perhaps things must be as they are, and I may simply be incapable of understanding and valuing aright the greatest artistic genius of all times, because he has been metamorphosed from a story-teller into a preacher.

July 1, 1886

When I made Tolstoi's personal acquaintance, I had a peculiar feeling of embarrassment, even of anxiety. It seemed to me as though this great knower of souls must penetrate at a glance into all the secrets, all the recesses, of my soul. In his presence I felt sure I should not be able to conceal all the follies hidden deep within me. Conversing with him a man would not be able to show the externals of his mind and nothing more. 'If Tolstoi is a good man — as he must be and doubtless is,' I thought to myself, 'he will be delicate and gentle, like a physician, who probes wounds and knows all the painful spots; and he will try to avoid the sensitive places, or to touch them lightly and soothingly. In this way he will make me feel that there is nothing hidden from his eyes and that — were he not so merciful — he might quite brutally strike to the very centre of the wound.'

I was equally afraid of both these things, but neither one nor the other happened. This man, who is the deepest and greatest of all students of the human heart, — if we may judge by his novels, — becomes in private conversation a simple, friendly human being, displaying almost none of this all-knowledge which I had so feared. To be sure, he did not avoid touching on sensitive topics, but he was far from willing to cause definite pain. I speedily found out that he did not want to treat me as an object of investigation, but simply wished to talk about music, in which at this period he was greatly interested. He spoke to me repeatedly, and with obvious satisfaction, of his refusal to recognize Beethoven and his frank doubt whether the composer was a genius. This willingness to drag down a universally recognized master to one's own level of incomprehension is a trait which ought to be foreign to a great man's nature. Such things belong rather to the use and custom of mediocre folk.

And yet my composer's vanity was never in all my life so stirred and roused as in the moment when Tolstoi, as he sat near me listening to the Andante of my first quartette, began to weep and sob.

July 11, 1886

It is generally maintained that the misuse of alcoholic drinks is harmful. I grant the point without argument,

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but nevertheless I, a sickly and exceptionally nervous man, simply cannot get along without the poison of alcohol to which Mr. Mikluha-Maklai is so violently opposed. The gentleman who owns this peculiar name is so fortunate as to have no craving for vodka, but how unfair it is for him to make up his mind solely on the basis of his own taste and to deny others what does not please him. I, for example, am accustomed to drink something every evening, and cannot get along without it. What must I do in order to be received into the colony which Mr. Mikluha-Maklai is planning? — in case, of course, I should wish to be received.

Is he, however, altogether right? In the first phases of intoxication I have a feeling of absolute well-being, and I comprehend far more in this condition than I could comprehend if I did not take this 'poison'! I, moreover, cannot observe that my health suffers in any way. Moreover, *quod licet Iovi, non licet bovi*. God alone knows who is right, I or Mr. Mikluha-Maklai. Yet there is no misfortune so great as not being included in the number of his colonists!

July 12, 1886

I have read *The Death of Ivan Iliich*, and I am more than ever convinced that Tolstoi is the greatest author of all times and all peoples. If we had nothing but Tolstoi's art to boast of, Russia would not have to sink her head in shame, not even if all that Europe has given to mankind were spread out before her; and in my conviction of the immeasurably great, almost divine, significance of Tolstoi, patriotism plays no part.

September 20, 1886

Tolstoi does not refer to any revealer of truth, except Christ, with love and devotion — or, for that matter, with contempt and hatred either. We do not know what his attitude was to Socrates, Shakespeare, Pushkin, Gogol. We do not know whether he loved Michelangelo and Raphael, Turgenev and Dickens, George Sand and Flaubert. Perhaps the master's intimates know the master's likes and dislikes in the realms of philosophy and art, but nowhere in his writings has this genius in words let fall a word which would enlighten us as to his view of the great figures who approximate his own genius or are of approximately the same significance. To me, for example, he observed that Beethoven was without talent, — placing Mozart in opposition to him, — but in print he has uttered nothing with regard to music or the other arts. I believe that this man bows his head only before God or before the people, — an agglomeration of individuals, — and that he worships no man. Siutaev was no individual in Tolstoi's eyes, but the people themselves, the personification of one aspect of popular wisdom. It would be interesting to know what this literary giant loved and what he spurned.

September 20, 1886

It will probably be interesting to know my own musical sympathies and preferences when I am dead — all the more because it is not my custom to discuss them in conversation. I will go through the list systematically, discussing my contemporaries as well as all the great musicians of every century. I will begin with Beethoven, whom it is customary to regard as a being absolutely without superior, whom one must follow and adore as a deity. I bow before the greatness of some of his works, but I do not love Beethoven. My attitude toward his work reminds me of the feelings which I entertained in childhood toward the Lord God of Sabaoth. I felt for Him —

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and even to-day I have not changed this feeling — an emotion of admiration, but also one of fear. He had created earth and Heaven, and He had created me, too, and therefore I prostrated myself before Him, but I did not love Him. Christ, on the other hand, filled me through and through with love. He was God, it is true, but He was likewise man. He suffered as we suffer. Toward Him we have a human feeling of pity. We love His ideal human side.

And thus, if Beethoven occupies a place similar to that of the Lord God of Sabaoth in my mind, I love Mozart as I might love a musical Christ. I believe such a comparison is in no sense blasphemous. Mozart was a being of such angelic and childlike purity, his music is so full of unearthly beauty, that if anyone at all may be named in the same breath with Christ, it is Mozart.

I started out to discuss Beethoven, and here I am talking about Mozart! It is my deepest conviction that Mozart is the highest, the culminating point in music. No one can bring tears to my eyes like Mozart, no one can make me shiver with delight and with the consciousness that I, too, am participating in something which approaches what we call the ideal. Beethoven can also compel one to shiver, to tremble, but that is with a feeling of fear. There is something almost painful in it.

I do not understand musical criticism, and I shall not go into details, and yet two things I will maintain: —

1. In Beethoven I love the middle period and parts of his first period. I frankly hate his last period, and especially the last quartettes. In this period there are some beams of light and nothing more. The rest is chaos over which, in an impenetrable void, hovers the spirit of this musical Sabaoth.

2. In Mozart I love everything, as we do love everything in a man whom we genuinely love. Above everything, however, his *Don Juan*, since I owe to this work my first realization of what music means. Until the age of seventeen I understood nothing except Italian music, which, though it is thoroughly sympathetic, is only half-music. When I say that I love everything in Mozart, I do not, of course, mean to maintain that everything he wrote, even the least significant of his works, is a masterpiece. No! I am, for example, ready to admit that not a single one of his sonatas can be called a great work, and yet I love each of them because they are his, because this musical Christ, in touching them, has made them something holy.

As for the predecessors of Beethoven and Mozart, I have little to say. I like to play Bach because it is amusing to play a good fugue. Yet I do not recognize him as a great genius, as so many do. Handel in my mind is a great man of the fourth degree, and not in the least amusing. Gluck I find sympathetic, in spite of his relative poverty as a creator. I love some things in Haydn.

All these four trumps, however, are combined in Mozart. Only a man who knows Mozart can appreciate these four at their full value, for Mozart, as the greatest and most powerful of all musical creators, has not hesitated to take these composers also under his shield, and in this way to preserve them from oblivion. They are beams sent off by the sun — by Mozart.

September 21, 1887

How short life is! A man might do so much, might learn so much, might express so much! He keeps putting it off, thinking that there is still plenty of time, and is suddenly surprised by death. It is a year since I have touched this notebook — and how many things

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have changed! How strange it is to read over this diary and find that 365 days ago I still was afraid to admit that, in spite of the flaming sympathy that Christ wakens in me, I ventured to doubt His divinity! Since then my religious feelings have become far clearer. I have thought so much of God, life and death, and I have kept putting to myself the questions, Whence? How? Why?

There was a time when I might have cleared up my religious beliefs and gained for myself some definite idea of my faith's significance and limits. But life with its everyday affairs keeps fleeting by. I doubt whether I shall have time to give expression to that credo that I formed the last time and which crystallized itself so clearly. I have not transformed it into prayer. I pray just as I used to, just as we learned to pray. Moreover, God hardly needs to know how and why one prays. God has no need of our prayers, but we need His!

June 27, 1887

It seems to me that letters are never thoroughly straightforward. So at least I judge from my own experience and observation. No matter to whom or from what purpose I happen to be writing, I think first of all about the impression that the letter may make, not merely on the man who receives it, but also on some eventual chance reader. I strike an attitude. Often I try to make the letter extremely simple, sincere, and straightforward. Or again I try to create an agreeable impression. Somehow, I never manage to give expression to my true feelings and my true self in my correspondence — without counting the letters that I write in moments of affectation; and when I read the letters of famous men which have been published after their death, I can never escape a feeling of falseness and insincerity.

June 27, 1888

I shall continue the comparison of my musical likes and dislikes. How do I feel about the Russian composers?

Glinka. A new and magnificent apparition in the artistic sphere. A dilettante who composed colorless quadrilles, fantasies on modern Italian themes now for the piano, now for the violin, and also trite series (quartettes, sextettes), not to mention romances — though with it all he contrived to create nothing except banalities in the taste of the 1830's. Yet this dabbler suddenly, at the age of thirty-four, composed an opera which, for sheer loftiness, genius, and the newness of its qualities, could be set side by side with the greatest and deepest things known in art. It is all the more amazing when you remember that the composer of this opera, some twenty years later, wrote his memoirs, which show him to have been an honest, good-natured fellow, to be sure, but otherwise quite without depth, a banal and insignificant individual. I am puzzled by the insoluble question how such great artistic power can be joined to such banality and how this colorless dilettante could suddenly, at a single bound, place himself beside Mozart, — yes, yes, beside Mozart, — Beethoven, and musical geniuses of equal stature. It is no exaggeration to speak in such terms of the composer who created the immortal *Slavsia*.

I leave the problem, however, to men who know more than I do about the secrets of the creative spirit, which is at once so fragile and so whimsical in its choice of the vessels it will fill.

I can only say that there is scarcely any man who values Glinka more highly or loves his magnificent music more. I am no unconditional admirer of *Russlan and Lyudmila*, and am rather inclined to prefer the *Life for the Tsar*, although *Russlan* actually seems to

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possess more musical value. The elementary strength of the first opera exercises a repelling influence over me, however, while *Slavsia* is gigantic, overwhelming! There can be no talk of preference in this case. Neither in Mozart, nor in Gluck, nor in any of the other masters is a better model to be found. Incredible! No less an expression of his unusual genius is the *Kamarinskaya*. Let me add that without trying to make anything save a trivial and amusing plaything, this man has created, out of nothing, a little work in which every measure is a product of the highest creative strength. Since then almost fifty years have passed and many Russian symphonic works have been written. One may say that a genuinely Russian symphonic school exists, and this whole school has its roots in the *Kamarinskaya*. Russian composers for years to come will find an inexhaustible source in it, since much time and great talent will be required to exhaust its full riches. Yes, Glinka is a true creative genius!

July 23, 1888

Dargomyzhskii? He had talent, of course, but there has never been a clearer example of the musical dilettante as a type than he. Glinka was a dilettante, too, but his dilettantism was the veil of a tremendous genius; and we should ultimately have had no cause to talk about Glinka's dilettantism, were it not for his banal memoirs. Quite otherwise is Dargomyzhskii's case, for his dilettantism fills his works and the forms he chose for them. Is it not dilettantism for a man of average talent, unsupported by technical knowledge, to try to pass himself off as an innovator? When shortly before his death Dargomyzhskii composed *The Stone Guest* he seemed to be thoroughly convinced that he was shattering all the old traditions and all the fundamentals, and erecting on their ruins something gigantic which had been lacking there before.

I had frequent opportunities of meeting him during his later years, but — quite comprehensibly — I found it impossible to enter upon any discussion with him, on account of his illness. One thing I can say, however, and it is this: I know nothing less agreeable, nothing more mendacious, than these unfortunate efforts to introduce truth into a sphere of art where everything depends upon untruth anyway, and where in the ordinary sense of the word there can be no such thing as truth, and where it is not needed.

Dargomyzhskii was not a master. He never possessed the tenth part of Glinka's technical knowledge. He had an undoubted piquancy and originality, and he succeeded with some curiosities in harmony. But the essence of musical beauty is not to be found in curiosities, though many people think so.

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ARIADNE[1]

BY A. A. MILNE

[*Ariadne*, which opened in New York a few days ago, is a mildly satiric play, in which Mr. A. A. Milne offers the suggestion that business men are inclined to take their business a little — just a little — too seriously. To prove his point he introduces us into the household of John Winter, Esquire, solicitor in a London suburb, at the moment when that gentleman is having a violent disagreement with his wife, Ariadne. The couple have reached that dangerous moment in such crises when each party insists that there is no quarrel — and anything is likely to happen.]

ARIADNE. There was no quarrel. I merely said that I would n't have Mr. Meldrum in my house again, and you said that, in that case, you would ask him to dinner to-night. Hardly a quarrel.

JOHN. I explained quite clearly why we had to be polite to him.

ARIADNE. You explained that he was one of your most important clients.

JOHN. *The* most important.

ARIADNE. Yes. Oh, you put it very clearly.

JOHN. I am not the only solicitor in Melchester, you know.

ARIADNE. And Mr. Meldrum is n't the only bounder.

JOHN. But I'm getting a good deal of his work, and if we can keep on the right side of him there's no saying what it will lead to.

ARIADNE. That's what I feel.

JOHN. If he took offense suddenly about anything, he'd think nothing of going straight off to another solicitor —

ARIADNE. And making love straight off to another solicitor's wife.

JOHN. Oh, come! You are n't a newly married girl. You know how to keep that sort of man in order.

ARIADNE. As a rule, yes. But in one of those awkward cases when you have to choose between preserving the honor and dignity of your husband and preserving the prosperity of his business —

JOHN. Nonsense! That's going much too far.

ARIADNE. Almost the very words I said to Mr. Meldrum last time.

JOHN. I don't like having him here any more than you do, but I can't deliberately throw good money away.

ARIADNE. There's another way of putting that, you know.

JOHN. What?

ARIADNE. I don't like throwing good money away, but I can't deliberately let my wife be insulted.

JOHN (*burying himself in his paper*). Insulted! Rubbish!

ARIADNE (*shaking her head at him*). Oh, John!

JOHN (*blustering*). Look at Hester. She's known him as long as I have. She does n't make a fuss. He and Hector do a lot of business together. Do you think Hester makes a fuss when he goes to their house? Do you think she shrieks out that she is being insulted?

[1] By permission of the Theatre Guild, Inc., producers.

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ARIADNE (*smiling*). Don't tempt me, John.

JOHN. I suppose now you are going to run down my sister. I suppose no one in Melchester is good enough for you. That 's how it is.

ARIADNE. *You* were once, John.

JOHN. The long and the short of it is that you don't like Meldrum. If it's any satisfaction to you, neither do I. But for the sake of the business, on which you depend as much as I do, I ask you to be friendly to him. Well, polite anyhow.

ARIADNE. I will be more than polite. I will be friendly. That I promise.

JOHN (*coming up to her*). You've got a way with you, you know. You can't pretend you have n't. I've seen you with all sorts of people, people you must have hated, smiling at 'em as sweetly as if you'd loved them all your life.

ARIADNE (*smiling to herself*). I will smile like that at Mr. Meldrum. Watch me.

[The dinner party follows. The guests are John's sister Hester Chadwick and her husband, Hector Chadwick, Janet Ingleby, a blasé young lady of the modern sort who becomes important later on in the play — and the great Horace Meldrum, who, says his author, is 'a bounder undoubtedly, but in the heroic manner.' At the end of the evening that engaging couple, Hester and Hector, depart, and John takes Janet home. Ariadne and Horace being left alone, the expected happens.]

HORACE. Are *you* going to London to-morrow?

ARIADNE. Yes.

HORACE. Fancy that! Alone?

ARIADNE. I don't know yet.

HORACE. When will you know?

ARIADNE. Perhaps in a minute or two.

HORACE. It's funny we should both be going to London to-morrow, is n't it?

ARIADNE. But we might n't both be going by the same train.

HORACE. Ah! — What train are you going by?

ARIADNE. The 10.15.

HORACE (*disappointed*). Oh! That's a pity.

ARIADNE. Why?

HORACE. I can't get away before the 12.05. There's a bit of business I've got to see to —

ARIADNE (*demurely*). I think I *am* going on the 10.

HORACE (*considering*). It may mean a matter of a hundred pounds — (*Making up his mind*) No, dammit, one can't throw away good business just for a bit of fun. You do your shopping or whatever it is, and I'll call for you wherever you like, and we'll have that little lunch at Frascati's. How's that? I'll be with you at half-past one.

ARIADNE. Well, of course I do like something to eat about then.

HORACE. Right. That's a bet! Where do I pick you up?

ARIADNE. Well, I shall be at my club —

HORACE (*jovially contemptuous*). Your club! You women and your clubs! But bless you, in spite of your votes and your clubs and your cigarettes, you are just the same as Eve was before you.

ARIADNE. Yes, but that is n't the address of the club. Or don't you want to know the address?

HORACE. Well, give us the name. I suppose the cabman will know where it is.

ARIADNE. The United Arts.

HORACE (*whipping out his pencil and writing on his cuff*). A. W., United Arts, 1.30.

ARIADNE (*watching him*). What an interesting time your laundress must have.

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HORACE. Naturally I never put any business secrets there. (*He puts back his pencil.*) And now what about that train back?

ARIADNE. You seem very certain of yourself.

HORACE. It is n't difficult to entertain a pretty woman.

ARIADNE. Experienced man!

HORACE. Well, yes, I've knocked about a bit.

ARIADNE. But all women like that, don't they?

HORACE. They do, you may take my word for it.

ARIADNE. But I shall come back by the 3 train.

HORACE. Oh no, you won't.

ARIADNE. Well, perhaps I won't.

HORACE. I know how to manage women, bless their pretty little faces.

ARIADNE. I can see you do.

[This somewhat ambiguous dialogue explains why Hester and Hector, dropping in to call on Saturday afternoon, find no Ariadne to receive them but only a note to John propped up by the clock on the mantel. They are tremendously curious. Perhaps the old General is dead at last. How much money will he leave? Just then John comes in and reads the note.]

JOHN. Ariadne!

HESTER. What is it, John? Let me look. (*She takes the letter from him.*)

JOHN. It's ridiculous!

HECTOR. Well, but what is it, my dear boy? (*Trying to get at the letter*) May I —

HESTER. Good gracious!

HECTOR. May I be allowed —

HESTER. Had you any idea of this?

JOHN. Is it likely?

HECTOR. Might I —

HESTER. But *why?*

JOHN. Why, indeed!

HECTOR. Might I be allowed — (*He gets the letter at last. They watch him reading it.*) Merciful Heavens! My old friend Horace Meldrum!

HESTER. She does n't actually say Mr. Meldrum.

HECTOR. True. Let us be fair. She just says Horace. 'Horace and I are going into the unknown together. Do not try to follow us.' But if it is not Horace Meldrum, who can it be?

HESTER (*to* JOHN). Did she know any other Horace?

JOHN. Not that I know of. But it can't be Meldrum. That's impossible.

HECTOR (*turning over the letter*). Ah, a postscript! This may throw more light on the matter.

JOHN. A postscript!

HESTER (*trying to look over his shoulder*). I did n't see that.

HECTOR. 'P. S. I am putting this against the clock so that you will be sure to see it.' That, at any rate, shows thoughtfulness.

JOHN (*bitterly*). Ha! (*To* HECTOR) Here! Give it me! (*He takes the letter.*)

HESTER. Why do you say it can't be Mr. Meldrum?

JOHN. She hates him. She told me so only yesterday.

HESTER. Ah!

HECTOR. Hate and love! You know what the old adage says. Love and Hate — I forget the actual wording.

JOHN (*fiercely*). I tell you she hated him. She thought he was a bounder!

HECTOR (*staggered*). My old friend Horace Meldrum a bounder!

JOHN. A bounder, I tell you! A cad! That's not love!

HESTER. It might be deception.

HECTOR. You think she was just throwing dust in his eyes? It may be so.

JOHN (*going to the door*). I'll ring up Meldrum now. I'll prove it to you —

HECTOR (*suddenly*). John! My poor John!

JOHN (*turning back at the door*). What?

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HECTOR. To think that it should have escaped my memory!

HESTER. What? You never told me.

HECTOR. How can I have been so foolish? I called in to see Horace Meldrum earlier this afternoon on a small matter of business —

JOHN (*eagerly*). Well?

HECTOR. I was told he had gone to London.

JOHN. Good God!

HESTER. Well, that's odd, certainly.

JOHN. Perhaps Ariadne did n't go herself, after all. Perhaps she has just gone out somewhere in the town.

HESTER. Mary told me she had gone to London.

JOHN. Did she? — What were you saying about a dressing-case?

HECTOR. Taking, according to Mary, a dressing-case with her.

HESTER. Why should she do that?

HECTOR. And not on a Wednesday, mark you, but a Saturday!

[The door opens and Ariadne comes in. John and Hector draw back in amazement.]

JOHN. Ariadne!

ARIADNE. John!

HECTOR. Well, well, well!

JOHN. Where have you been?

HECTOR. You may well ask.

ARIADNE. Running away from you, John.

JOHN. Then what are you doing here now?

ARIADNE. I have come back to you, John. (*She sits down.*)

JOHN. It was just a joke, was it, your letter?

HECTOR. A joke in very doubtful taste. In more than doubtful taste.

HESTER. If it *was* a joke.

ARIADNE (*looking at them*). You have shown them my letter?

HECTOR. We know all.

JOHN. What could I — they were here. Do you think I can read a letter like that, and put it calmly in my pocket, as if nothing had happened?

ARIADNE. No, no, of course not, dear.

HECTOR. Have you any right to call him 'dear' — that is the question.

ARIADNE (*reproachfully*). I only ran away this morning, Hector.

HECTOR. True, true. Nothing could have — Quite so, quite so.

JOHN. You have been to London?

ARIADNE. Yes.

JOHN. And why have you come back now?

ARIADNE. He missed his train.

JOHN. Who?

ARIADNE. The gentlemen I was running away with.

HECTOR. Meldrum. My old friend Horace Meldrum.

JOHN (*fiercely*). Was it Meldrum? Where is Meldrum?

ARIADNE. He missed his train.

JOHN. What do you mean? You say here in your letter — (*He turns it over, trying to find the place.*)

ARIADNE. Let me find it for you, dear.

JOHN (*refusing her offer*). Here it is. 'Horace and I are going into the unknown together. Do not try to follow us.'

ARIADNE. Yes, that's right.

JOHN. Well?

ARIADNE. Darling, I keep telling you. He missed his train. The 12.05.

HECTOR (*as if he now understood it all*). The 12.05. Ah!

JOHN. But I don't see —

ARIADNE. When you arrange to go into the unknown with a woman by a certain train, you can't just go and *miss* the train. It's so careless.

HESTER. You could have gone by the next.

ARIADNE (*carelessly*). I expect he did. I daresay he is searching London for me now — Ring the bell, Hector, will you? I am dying for some tea.

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HECTOR (*indignantly*). Tea! (*But he rings the bell.*)

ARIADNE (*sweetly*). I've been going backwards and forwards all day.

JOHN. I am afraid I am still very stupid. Meldrum, as I understand it, was to have gone with you to London, by the 12.05 train?

ARIADNE. No, no. I had gone by the 10.15. He was to come up later and call for me at my club.

HECTOR. Her club. You see, Hester, we were right to make that the starting-point.

JOHN. And he was coming up by the 12.05?

ARIADNE. Yes. Only he missed it.

HECTOR. Presumably he was detained by some business —

ARIADNE. Presumably. (*Enter* MARY.) Tea, please, Mary. (*To them all*) Have you had any?

HESTER. Is it likely?

HECTOR. Tsss! (*He indicates the maid.*)

ARIADNE. You waited for me. How nice of you! — Tea for four.

MARY. Yes, Madam. (*She goes out.*)

ARIADNE. I am sorry, dear. You were saying that Horace was probably detained by business.

JOHN. Well?

ARIADNE. Well, you see, if a man is detained by business when you are going to a cricket match with him, that does n't matter so much, but if he is detained by business when you are running away with him — well, ask Hester.

HECTOR. My dear lady!

HESTER (*coldly*). I never have run away from my husband.

ARIADNE. But you must often have wanted to — I am sorry, Hector, but — *any* husband — (*To* HESTER) How would you feel if, just as you had worked yourself up to it, you got a telegram, 'Missed train'? Just like that. 'Missed train.' It's so — so uncomplimentary. Would n't you feel that, if he had really loved you, he would have run the whole way to London *behind* the train, rather than waste a moment sending telegrams?

JOHN. That's absurd.

ARIADNE. Oh, of course, if you're going to stand up for him —

JOHN (*indignantly*). I am doing nothing of the sort. I merely say —

ARIADNE. And I merely say that, when you are running away with a woman, it's an insult to her to miss the train.

HECTOR. He might have only *just* missed it.

ARIADNE. Then he should have taken a special, should n't he, Hester?

HESTER (*unwillingly*). Well, certainly it would have shown a more —

ARIADNE. There you are! Hester feels just as I do.

HESTER. I feel nothing of the sort!

ARIADNE (*coaxingly*). A little bit.

HECTOR. A special! Do you know how much a special costs?

ARIADNE. Ah, now we're talking! How much does a special cost, John?

JOHN (*absently*). Fifty pounds? I don't know.

ARIADNE. I thought solicitors knew all those things.

HECTOR. Every penny of fifty pounds!

ARIADNE. And what am I worth? About twenty? Oh, ridiculous of him to have taken a special! Most unbusinesslike. Ariadne's one thing, but fifty *pounds!*

JOHN. And he did n't follow you?

ARIADNE. Not by that train.

HECTOR. Let me see, if he missed the 12.05, he 'd probably catch the — (*He feels in his pockets for the time-table.*) Now then —

HESTER. What does it matter what train he went by?

HECTOR (*turning the pages rapidly*

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with a moistened finger). In a case like this nothing is immaterial.

JOHN. Well, then, you got a telegram at your club saying that he 'd missed his train.

ARIADNE. And was coming by the next. (*Taking a telegram from her bag*) Here it is.

JOHN. Ah! (*He reads it.*)

HECTOR. May I? (*He takes it and reads it.*) Ah! Handed in at Melchester Central 12.20. Received Knightsbridge 12.38. 'Missed train. Expect me at three. Horace.'

JOHN. And what did you do?

HECTOR. One moment, dear boy. (*Returning to time-table*) He would catch the 1.17. Gets to town — gets to town — (*He turns a page.*)

JOHN. And what did you do, when you read the telegram?

ARIADNE. Came home again.

HECTOR. Change at West Hutton. I knew it was n't a good train. Yes, he ought to have caught the 12.05.

ARIADNE. He ought. That 's what I keep saying.

JOHN (*sarcastically*). And as he did n't, you have decided that you don't want to go into the unknown with him after all?

ARIADNE. No. It would be so very unknown if he kept on missing trains.

JOHN. Whereupon you come coolly back here, as if nothing had happened, and order tea?

ARIADNE. I was too excited to have lunch. Thinking of him.

JOHN. And now what do you propose to do?

ARIADNE (*meekly*). Wait to hear what you propose to do with me, John.

HECTOR. Exactly. Now we are getting to grips with the problem. To take the possibilities. Divorce.

HESTER. Rubbish!

HECTOR (*with dignity*). Divorce, I was about to say, is impossible.

ARIADNE. Not impossible, but very bad for business.

HECTOR. So be it. We rule out divorce and come to the second alternative. Separation. Judicial or otherwise.

ARIADNE (*shaking her head*). So expensive.

HECTOR. What would a separation figure out at, John, all told?

ARIADNE. I was thinking of the expense afterwards. It would mean two establishments for John. Even as it is, with me helping him by making love to his clients, we can only just keep this one going. Is n't it so, John?

[Indignation at length conquers even John's business scruples. He tries to see Meldrum, but that gentleman is consistently and quite comprehensibly 'away.' As auditors we assist once more at a domestic scene.]

JOHN (*angrily*). I've tried to see Meldrum, I keep on trying to see Meldrum, but if he's away, what can I do?

ARIADNE (*surprised*). Away?

JOHN. Of course he's away. At least he's never at home or at his office when I go to see him

ARIADNE (*eagerly*). What are you going to say to him?

JOHN. Tell him that, if I see him inside my house again, I'll knock his head off.

ARIADNE. John! My darling! (*She goes to him and puts her arms around his neck.*)

JOHN. Go away! (*He tries to unloose her arms.*)

ARIADNE. And are you prepared to lose all his business?

JOHN (*bravely*). If necessary.

ARIADNE (*admiringly*). John!

JOHN (*hopefully*). It may not come to that, of course.

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ARIADNE. But it must!

JOHN (*uncomfortably*). My dear child, you can't let sentiment interfere with business. No business man does. If it 's convenient to Meldrum that I should continue to act for him, naturally he will want me to.

ARIADNE. And naturally you will?

JOHN. Naturally.

[An opportune call from Janet Ingleby puts the whole situation into the competent hands of Ariadne. Janet reveals a secret and asks for advice. On the historic day when Horace failed to meet Ariadne in London, he later happened to meet Janet on the station platform. He suggested dinner, and after dinner he — proposed marriage! Janet has come to ask advice. Shall she marry him? Ariadne points out obvious difficulties. Janet decides to reject her suitor, but promises not to break the news to him for twenty-four hours. Ariadne has reasons of her own. Meldrum calls that evening to see John — on business.]

HORACE (*advancing airily, a hand extended*). Ah, dear lady, I just looked round to say how sorry I was —

ARIADNE (*rising dramatically*). Horace!

HORACE (*less airily*). How sorry I was our little luncheon fell through —

ARIADNE. My darling!

HORACE (*startled*). Eh?

ARIADNE. I was afraid something had happened to you.

HORACE. Oh no, no, no. A little bit of business turned up. You know how it does. And I said to myself, 'Mrs. John is a sensible woman, she'll understand how it is when a little bit of business turns up. She'll let me off that little bit of lunch I promised her.' But I thought I'd just come round — only polite —

ARIADNE (*bewildered*). Horace!

HORACE. What's the matter?

ARIADNE. Ah, I understand. How tactful of you! But you can speak quite safely now. We are alone. My husband is upstairs having a bath — Darling!

HORACE. I — I — I — Really!

ARIADNE. When do we start?

HORACE (*mechanically*). Start?

ARIADNE. Yes, start.

HORACE. Start where?

ARIADNE. That's for you to say, Horace. What about Spain?

HORACE. Spain?

ARIADNE. Yes, Spain.

HORACE (*mechanically*). Spain — Spain — Spain — Spain —

ARIADNE. Spain — until it 's all blown over.

HORACE. Spain until it's all blown over — (*With an effort*) My dear lady, I — I don't know what you're talking about.

ARIADNE (*horrified*). Horace!

HORACE. I don't know what you're talking about.

ARIADNE. Have I made a terrible mistake?

HORACE (*seeming to find some comfort in the phrase*). I don't know what you're talking about.

ARIADNE. You did ask me to come away with you?

HORACE. I don't know what —

ARIADNE. To leave my husband and come away with you?

HORACE (*with energy*). Never! Never! Never! Never! Never thought of such a thing. Never entered my head.

ARIADNE (*wrinkling her forehead*). I'm sure you said *something*.

HORACE (*awkwardly*). Just a little bit of lunch — I don't say I did n't suggest that little bit of lunch. What's the harm in that?

ARIADNE. Oh! How awful!

HORACE. Awful! What's awful!

ARIADNE. What have I done?

HORACE. What *have* you done?

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ARIADNE. Why, you see, I left a note for John.

HORACE (*faintly*). You left what?

ARIADNE. You see, I misunderstood you, and I left a note for John saying we were going away together.

HORACE. But — but — but —

ARIADNE. And then you did n't meet me as we arranged, and I thought you must have had some terrible accident, so I hurried back here to wait until you were well again.

HORACE (*anxiously*). Yes, but what about the note?

ARIADNE. It was too late. John had read it.

HORACE. But — but — but — my dear lady —

ARIADNE. Was n't it a pity?

HORACE. But wha — wha — what did it say?

ARIADNE. Oh, just that you and I were going away together, and he was n't to follow us. I did n't say anything about Spain, because I was n't quite sure.

HORACE. Well, of all the — well, of all the — well, of all the —

ARIADNE (*penitently*). I was hasty, I see that now. But what are we going to do?

HORACE. What's *he* going to do? That's the point.

ARIADNE. Do you mean John?

HORACE (*anxiously*). What's he been doing these two last days?

ARIADNE (*simply*). Waiting for *you*, Horace.

HORACE (*nervously*). How do you mean, waiting for me?

ARIADNE. Just waiting for you. I think he wants to speak to you.

HORACE (*hopefully*). Ah, yes, yes. Perhaps that's it. There *is* a little matter of business between us —

ARIADNE. This was n't business, Horace. He talked as though it would be a pleasure. He's been looking for you everywhere.

HORACE. What do you think he's going to say?

ARIADNE. He did n't tell me. All he said was that he was going to break your neck for you.

HORACE (*in alarm*). But — but — but — but —

ARIADNE. But I suppose he'll say, 'Ah, Meldrum, here you are' first.

HORACE. But — but — but I've just fixed things up with old Ingleby. Little Miss Janet and I — Well, but that shows how ridiculous the whole thing is. I'm marrying Miss Ingleby.

ARIADNE (*reproachfully*). Not with a broken neck!

HORACE (*anxiously*). But, look here, my dear lady, you must explain. Tell him the whole thing was a horrible mistake.

ARIADNE. Oh, I shall. In fact I'm sure he'll feel it for himself. He'll look down at the body and say, 'Yes, it was a mistake. I ought n't to have done it.' And I shall say, 'I told you so, John. You see, we've got nowhere to put it,' and he'll say, 'What about the cellar?' and I shall say, 'It's much too big for the cellar,' and he will say — (*But the sight of* HORACE'S *face is too much for her. Weakly she adds*) And he will say — (*and then breaks down altogether and laughs hysterically*).

[At length the perplexed Meldrum allows Ariadne to persuade him that she has been joking all the time. Priding himself on his sense of humor, he laughs heartily. But just then John enters, not joking at all, though Meldrum thinks he is.]

JOHN (*very impressively*). If I ever catch you in my house again, I'll thrash you within an inch of your life. Secondly, your deeds and papers will be sent back to you to-morrow, and after that I won't soil my fingers by

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touching any of your dirty business again.

ARIADNE (*to herself, meaning it*). Oh, well done, John!

HORACE (*meaning something else*). Is n't he good?

JOHN. And thirdly: If you so much as put a foot into my office again, I'll tell one of my clerks to kick you out.

HORACE (*in sheer admiration*). Marvelous, my dear fellow, marvelous! (*He chuckles to himself.*) Wonderful touch, that, about soiling your fingers — with *my* business!

JOHN (*to* ARIADNE). Is he mad? What's the matter with him?

ARIADNE. I think he thinks you're joking, dear. I think he thinks you've been joking all the time.

JOHN (*staggered*). Joking!

ARIADNE. Yes, I think that's what he thinks. I don't think he's taking you quite seriously.

JOHN (*grimly*). Oh — So you think I'm joking, eh?

HORACE (*comfortably*). My dear man, I know you're joking. You would n't be talking about business like that if you were n't joking.

JOHN (*nettled*). I'll soon show you if I'm joking or not.

HORACE. You did it so damn well that just for a moment you almost took me in. But when you talk of throwing away good business — all the nice little jobs I've given you, and all the nice little jobs I'm going to give you — (*chuckling*) why then, bless you, I *know* you're trying to pull my leg. That's *over*-acting, my boy.

JOHN. So you think I'm joking when I say that I won't do any more business for a man who tries to run away with my wife?

HORACE. Course I do.

JOHN. Damn you, I mean it.

HORACE (*waving him down*). No, no, dear boy.

JOHN (*appealingly*). Ariadne, tell him I mean it. Tell him I'm serious.

ARIADNE. But it sounds so silly, John.

JOHN (*to* HORACE). I mean it, do you hear?

HORACE (*chuckling comfortably*). No, no, dear boy. You've put up a very good performance, but now you're getting carried away. It's going to your head. As long as you talk about breaking my neck, and thrashing me within an inch of my life, that's all right, I say nothing against that. That's all in the character. But for a man to talk of throwing away good business, just because his wife and his best client —

JOHN (*grimly*). Now I'm going to kill you.

HORACE (*suddenly recovering himself*). Why, bless my soul, I'd almost forgotten what I came about. Our little joke put it clean out of my head. (*Very businesslike*) John, I want to see you to-morrow about my marriage settlement — Janet and I have fixed things up — I arranged with old Ingleby to meet him at your office. Eleven o'clock suit you? Right. I'll tell him. So long. (*He goes out.*)

JOHN (*rather bewildered — after a pause*). What was that he said? Marriage settlement?

ARIADNE. Yes, dear.

JOHN. Getting married? To Janet?

ARIADNE. He thinks so.

JOHN. Then how — But in that case he could n't —

ARIADNE. Exactly.

JOHN (*after a pause, still puzzling it out*). He said he thought it was all a joke my being angry. Why did he think it was all a joke?

ARIADNE. Because of what you said about giving up good business.

JOHN. Ridiculous nonsense.

ARIADNE. That was what he thought.

JOHN. Why should n't I have given

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it up? Of course, to a man like Meldrum, business *would* seem the only thing that mattered. But to any decent man — (*He stops.*)

ARIADNE. To any decent man —?

JOHN (*still thinking*). But that was n't it. Directly I came in he treated the whole thing as a joke. Why?

ARIADNE. Perhaps because I told him that the whole thing was a joke.

JOHN. You told him? (*He stares at her.*) Good Lord, then, you mean it was n't true that you were going off with him?

ARIADNE (*reproachfully*). True!

JOHN. Your letter — (*He feels in his pocket for it.*)

ARIADNE. John, did you really think I could possibly —

JOHN. But that telegram. You had made *some* sort of arrangement with him.

ARIADNE. I might have had lunch with him if he'd caught his train. I don't know. Would you mind that? Your favorite client?

JOHN (*having found the letter*). But if it was just lunch, why do you say this about going into the unknown together.

ARIADNE. We were lunching at Frascati's.

JOHN. And that was all? Did he only suggest lunch. (*She says nothing.*) Did he?

ARIADNE (*smiling to herself*). Well, I led him on a little. Just to see how far he *would* go.

JOHN. Why? Oh, I see; to teach him a lesson.

ARIADNE. Mr. Meldrum? You can't teach *him* anything.

JOHN. Then why?

ARIADNE. Well, perhaps to teach somebody else a lesson.

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A PAGE OF VERSE

FLIGHT

BY A. E.

[*Irish Statesman*]

At every heart-beat
Through the magic day
A lovely laughing creature
Ran away.
Where have they wandered,
The flock so gay?

I had but looked on them,
And away they ran,
The exquisite lips untouched.
As they began
To part, Time swept them
On his caravan.

These new-born beauties
The tyrant took.
Their gaze was on mine,
And mine forsook.
I could not hold even
One lovely look.

In what fold are they?
Could I pursue
Through the Everliving
And hold anew
All those golden motions
That were you?

If beauty were only
A day the same
We would know the Maker
And name His name;
We would know the substance
Was holy flame.

Is there an oasis
Where Time stands still?
Where the fugitive beauty
Stays as we will?
Is there an oasis
Where Time stands still?

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LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

'MODERN FIRSTS'

THE collecting-mania is assuredly one of the oddest quirks in human nature — though it is not an exclusively human foible, either; for crows, as every country schoolboy knows, will gather up bits of quartz and glass, bright-colored pebbles, and such other odds and ends as chance to please their sable fancies, and will visit their hoards ever and anon to pick over their treasures and enjoy them with very much the same delight that *Homo sapiens* thinks he finds in leafing over his stamp album or strolling through his private art-gallery. But surely, of all the queer fancies men have devised for their own amusement, the very queerest is the collection of books. Reading books is quite another matter, because in these days, when every hobby is frenziedly pursued, books worth collecting as *objets de vertu* speedily become too valuable to be comfortable reading. It is not pleasant to discover that you have inadvertently spilled ink on the heritage of generations yet unborn; and a choice array of first editions, as its owner speedily becomes aware, needs to be safely housed behind locked doors, which, even though they be of glass, are indubitably barriers; or, better still, immured in a vault that is damp-proof, worm-proof, burglar-proof, and friend-proof — an arrangement of epithets that is intended to be climactic.

For safe-keeping a vault is excellent. For mere literary purposes, however, there is practically nothing it does not leave to be desired; and — in spite of the persuasive arguments of the unduly bland gentlemen who sell bookcases and less important furniture — glass-fronted shelves are not a whit better, books being obviously meant to dwell on an open shelf where dust, it is only too true, may ruin them, but where at least they are preëminently reachable. The English language needs some such adjective as *glazen*, which would be quite as derogatory when applied to a bookcase as *brazen* is meant to be when applied to the bookcase's owner.

The collection of genuinely old books has always been a rather restricted sport, — like polo and the Old Masters, yachting, period furniture, or polar exploration, — and this for an identical reason, which is sound, though sordid: the men who can indulge such whims are few and far between. This is probably why the taste for first editions has of late years been extending beyond Caxton's handiwork and the quartos that Shakespeare despised, to include 'modern firsts.' It is quite as recherché nowadays to own a set of Conrad, all in first editions, as it is to own a folio; and, as a hobby, collecting modern firsts has the additional advantage that it is far less expensive. You can, if you like — that is, perhaps you can — pay £4000 for a first folio, whose leaves you may thereafter turn with gingerly respect, but which no man with a conscience can really read. Whereas, if your tastes run in that direction, you can still pick up a first edition of one of Mr. Masefield's less-sought recent books for a few paltry shillings — or even some of the early paper-bound Kiplings of the 'Indian Railway Library' series for not a great deal more. You may even have

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the satisfaction of making a good investment, for sometimes these things rise in value; and no man loves his hobby less because he can close it out at a profit, if he wants to. Joseph Conrad himself confessed, a trifle grimly, that the purchaser of his manuscripts profited a thousand per cent by the transaction.

The notion that there is intrinsic merit in a first edition is peculiarly modern. Oxford's scornful rejection, in 1632, of the First in favor of the Second Folio is a rather spectacular example of the older attitude, but there are plenty more. It is only about a hundred years since first editions first began to be valuable for anything except the quality of the writing they contained, which all subsequent editions shared with them, sometimes in greater measure. Indeed, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries rather preferred second editions, on the entirely reasonable ground that they contained the authors' second thoughts, which were optimistically assumed to be wiser. The French critic Pierre Bayle even found it necessary to condemn the indifference of those slothful seekers after enlightenment who wholly neglected a book when it first appeared, because they were waiting for a new and revised edition. Bayle's castigation of these leisurely folk who did not help the second edition on its way by purchasing the first must have appealed mightily to the authors and the booksellers.

Nothing in the world of books — that realm of infinite caprice — is quite so whimsically inexplicable as the prices of modern first editions. When Professor A. E. Housman's *Last Poems* appeared in London a couple years ago at six or seven shillings, its first issue became a coveted item almost overnight. Prices soared, as prices have a way of doing in such cases, and all the copies vanished. *Last Poems* is the one book in English literature which has been a rarity from the day it was printed. Not even Shakespeare can claim so much.

Now, Professor Housman is one of the most distinguished poets of the century, and it is pleasant to see merit rewarded in its lifetime; but still it is profitable to ponder the fact that his poems were just as good in the second printing, from the same plates, and that they are just as good in 1925 as they were in 1922. But to-day you can buy this rare book — now a trifle less rare, apparently — for fifteen shillings. Why, pray, should Professor Housman's book be worth nearly a pound, while the first edition of Thomas Hardy's *Late Lyrics and Earlier*, published the same year, fetches but seven and six? Is it because Hardy has written innumerable books and Professor Housman but two? But then is it quite fair to leave out of the reckoning the Cambridge don's classical writings because, forsooth, he is a poet also? A good copy of *Desperate Remedies*, published when Hardy was a struggling youngster, is worth £60 to-day — but that is simply a case of rarity, for the book is exceedingly scarce and correspondingly hard to come by. The first printings of *Late Lyrics* and *Last Poems* must have been nearly the same — yet see the difference in collectors' eyes.

It is reasonable that a Henry James first edition should fetch nearly a pound, or even more; but why should James Stephens be worth thirty shillings and Bernard Shaw a paltry twelve, the same price as his neighbors in the alphabet, John Addington Symonds and Arthur Symons? No wonder the sage of Adelphi Terrace thinks this capitalistic world needs looking into. Remembering all the war-time enthusiasm for Alan Seeger, one finds it just a little surprising to see his first collected edition listed at seven and sixpence — yet

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no more surprising than to find Rupert Brooke at a scant three shillings. And why should Walter de la Mare's first editions — good poet though he is — be more sought than his fellows', and a copy of the early edition of *Henry Brocken* (not the recent reprint) nearly priceless?

Conrad, it is pleasant to note — unless one happens to be a prospective purchaser — is in a rising market. A first edition of *Lord Jim* is now worth five pounds ten. *The Nigger of the Narcissus* is ten pounds ten, being very rare with all the 'points,' which include four pages of advertisements and sixteen pages of the publisher's catalogue, besides the name Heinemann on the binding 'in large gilt letters, not of uniform size' — details none of which seems very intimately related to the art of the novelist.

It is a little too easy to say, by way of explanation, that scarcity or popularity alone determines the prices of these rare books of the future. Bernard Shaw is certainly popular, and few modern works can be much rarer than W. B. Yeats's second volume, *The Wanderings of Oisin*, no more than fifty good copies of which, in all human probability, now survive. Yet there is no large premium on Shaw, some of whose earlier editions were by no means large; and even *The Wanderings of Oisin* is worth less than three pounds, though no one can deny Yeats has a following. If scarcity makes *Desperate Remedies* valuable, why should it not do as much for *The Wanderings of Oisin?* Yeats may not be a Hardy, but he is obviously — a Yeats. Is fate playing one of its subtle little jokes on the poet who did get the Nobel prize and the poet who did n't?

No, no, it is all a matter of whims and literary fads, mingled — let us piously hope — with a generous measure of regard for greatness; even though dextrously manipulated — as the cynical may be allowed to fear — by those scheming rogues, the rare-book dealers, whose shops line Charing Cross Road.

All the unfortunates whose purses do not extend to rare books of any sort will unite in condemning their brethren's fondness for modern firsts as the merest folly — not genuinely literary, scarce even scholarly.

Too true, alas — who can deny it? The gist of the matter is in the author's words, which are or ought to be the same in any good edition. Such things as dates and rarity and 'points' and binding and 'state' — whether cut or uncut — are the least significant of trifles. Of course, of course. Yet in the accusation is there not something too much — a shade perhaps — of vehemence? Before we grant excess of credence to these carping critics, shall we not test their sincerity with the offer of — say — an autographed Conrad, first edition, for five dollars? When we find a man who resists *that*, why then we shall believe — perhaps!

*

FILMS ACROSS THE SEA

THE *Manchester Guardian* greets with ribald mirth the solemn indignaiton of an American moving-picture magnate who resents British ridicule of Hollywood's innocent endeavors to portray life as it is lived on the tight little island. With more truth than good taste, this indiscreet producer has lately been flinging in his insular critics' teeth the bitter fact that the English climate does not favor the making of moving pictures. (Some will greet this as the first good thing ever said about the English climate, but Hollywood's champion can hardly be expected to share that point of view.)

At any rate, the American movie-manufacturer fiercely reminds the Brit-

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ish that, if they want to see themselves on the screen at all, they must depend upon the sunny clime of California. It is evidently a life-and-death matter. German, Italian, Scandinavian, and Japanese producers he blisteringly describes as hopeless. The Briton must have California films or no films.

Yet in the face of this dismaying threat some wicked person in the *Manchester Guardian* office not only keeps up his courage, but is actually saucy enough to be disrespectful about California's efforts: —

> For years the funniest comedies on the screen have been the serious American studies of English life. Cinema days would be dull without the comic aristocracy, the Park Lane mansions with their big brass spittoons, the nigger cooks and village cathedrals, the traffic running along the right-hand curb toward the twin towers of Big Ben and St. Paul's. We should miss the *vers libres* on the leader page of the *Times*, the smart young men in the junior branches of the Consular Service who, having been 'classmates together at Oxford,' drift their separate ways and become Home Secretary and Viceroy of India in the brief space of half an hour. We should be sorry never again to see the family jewels handed round at afternoon tea. Life would be dark without our Californian cockneys.

A LEARNED THIEF

An extraordinary story of a learned German who for years has robbed European archives of the precious documents which he, as an historian, was permitted to examine, has come to light in Berlin. The culprit is the historical scholar Karl Hauck. The police raid on his flat reveals an extraordinary collection which contains letters from King Edward VII, Frederick the Great, William of Orange, and Prince Gorchakov, who seem to have been this light-fingered scholar's special favorites. There are also many signed photographs, impressions of historical seals, manuscripts and scores of famous poets and musicians.

It is charitable to hope that some of these have been honestly acquired, but there can be no doubt that many of them were pilfered at intervals during thirty years' research, when Hauck claimed to be writing a history of German culture and was allowed access to official files in London, Vienna, Brussels, The Hague, Madrid, and the Vatican.

He might never have been suspected had he been satisfied to keep his manuscripts for his favorite diversion, which consisted in sitting with his eyes fixed on the autograph of one of his favorite historical characters until the lines were so fixed in his brain that he could reproduce them and thus felt his own personality passing over into that of the great man whose signature he was forging.

Presently, however, he began to sell some, and it was not long before the director of the Prussian State Archives noticed an advertisement offering for sale an historical manuscript which he knew belonged in the State Archives at Vienna. Inquiry at the Austrian capital brought the information that the document in question had been stolen. After that it did not take the German police long to make an arrest.

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THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Robert Louis Stevenson. Man and Writer, by J. A. Steuart, 2 vols. London: Sampson Low; Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1924. $8.00.

THE dust of the combat roused in literary England by the revelations contained in Mr. J. A. Steuart's extraordinarily provocative life of Stevenson has at length died down sufficiently to make the figures of the combatants once more discernible. England has scarcely known such bitter exchange of personalities in a literary wrangle since the brave old days when the Reviewers lorded it in Edinburgh and savagely ordered a certain impertinent youth named Keats back to his gallipots.

The excess of the feeling roused is mainly due to the intense personal attachment for their idol felt by devotees of the Stevenson cult, plus the extreme bluntness with which Mr. Steuart made his revelations. The frenzy with which Stevenson-lovers turned upon the equally pugnacious biographer is just a little odd, since the worst of his revelations had already appeared in periodicals and had already met a half-hearted *démenti* from Sir Sidney Colvin — all of which was at the time reported in the *Living Age*. In brief, those revelations consisted of accounts of certain discreditable episodes, chiefly illicit love affairs, and mainly confined to the writer's early youth. They were based on 'new' or little-known documents, including some of the writer's early manuscripts, and on Mr. Steuart's personal investigations. Revealing Stevenson as at worst no worse than many another figure in literature, they nevertheless imparted a rather ironic note to *Virginibus Puerisque* and other ethical preachments; and were nicely calculated to exasperate readers who had been attracted by the only partially accurate depiction of Stevenson current since his death. It is not hard to understand why they were peculiarly galling to Stevenson's other biographer and friend, Sir Sidney Colvin.

The book also raises the old ethical and critical question which is likely to face every biographer of any hero short of archangelic stature — and archangels' lives, alas, in this bad world are seldom written. Shall the biographer present a figure so idealized that the heavens cannot possibly fall? Shall he blurt out the whole truth and let the heavens take their chances? Or shall he give sufficiently broad hints at the facts but discreetly avoid details? Obviously a biography is no good unless it tells the truth and the whole truth. But, on the other hand, is it fair to the dead to dig up their buried sins in elaborate detail? Mr. Steuart thought it was. Sir Sidney thought it was not. The result, when Sir Sidney received Mr. Steuart's book for review some months ago, is not hard to imagine. Neither is Mr. Steuart's fury when, snorting with wrath and indignation, he perused Sir Sidney's review in *The Nation and the Athenæum* a few weeks later. Neither, for that matter, is the instant action of scores of doughty Scots and Britons who, scenting the battle afar off, shouted Aha! and reached for their pens. No reputation emerged the better from the conflict except poor Stevenson's, which had already suffered major injuries.

Let there be no mistaking. Sir Sidney's review had the fire of conviction behind it and was of the sort that would wound any author who ever set pen to paper. He referred bitingly to Mr. Steuart's 'wearying waste of words,' 'his characteristic gratuitous verbiage and gushing redundancy about next to nothing,' 'preposterous exaggeration,' 'habitual failure to furnish evidence for particular statements,' 'platitude,' 'absurd distortion and exaggeration,' 'almost habitual misspelling of proper names,' and 'voluble, gushing, to my mind nauseously sentimental, speculations.' Sir Sidney said roundly: —

> The faults which have forced themselves on my notice in this bulky and pretentious book are many, and many the

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> superfluities, while the virtues I have found are few;

and his nearest approach to praise was an acknowledgment of Mr. Steuart's courtesy toward himself and the remark: —

> Though I do not think his book was wanted or is well done, there is a good deal in it, especially in its closing chapters, and indeed throughout the second volume, which can be read, if scarcely with pleasure, at all events without annoyance. It is fair to say that even its faults of long-windedness and exaggeration get mitigated towards the end.

This must be nearly the finest extant example of damnation by faint praise.

Now writers do not always ask to be handled with gloves, but if you try to handle them with mailed gauntlets the sparks will fly. Mr. Steuart replied in a letter of which a bystander at the ringside, 'Mark Over,' writing in the London *Outlook*, said: 'I doubt if so much studied abuse and rudeness have ever been compressed into a column of print.' Mr. Mark Over may, however, somewhat underestimate the capacity of a column, and it is fair to add that Mr. Steuart was scarcely more downright than Sir Sidney, though indubitably more personal. He accused his critic of 'sterile, nerveless, ex-cathedra platitudes,' 'ossified prejudices,' 'inflated self-consequence,' and 'the grand delusion that he owns Robert Louis Stevenson.' Sir Sidney had found fault with Mr. Steuart's style, but, said that criticized author, 'I am glad to think that the dullest reader would not find in my style the slightest resemblance to his' — which is not much more than calling names. No wonder 'Mark Over' thinks that 'Mr. Steuart seems wholly unable to stand criticism' — and indeed Mr. Steuart does stand criticism rather uneasily, for the reviewer of the *Times Literary Supplement* had a somewhat similar controversy with him which, though not so bitter, was a good deal longer and has only lately been stopped by the editor.

From all this controversy it must not be inferred that Mr. Steuart's 'critical biography' has had an unfavorable reception among British reviewers. One of Sir Sidney Colvin's grievances — Mr. Steuart did not object to this one — was that the devoted volume had been 'getting in many quarters much more praise than it seems to me to merit.' The *Spectator*, which is not given to overpraise, called it 'masterly,' and lauded the author's 'detachment of unprejudiced enthusiasm.' And though A. Bain Irvine calls it 'an entirely unnecessary book,' the London *Bookman* thinks that Stevenson 'would be the first to rebuke those critics who have been accusing Mr. Steuart of bad taste because he has written the plain truth.' The *Bookman's* critic also makes two interesting points when he writes: —

> After Henley's unmerciful disclosures everyone knew something of Stevenson's youthful lapses, and Mr. Steuart has simply filled in the details so that the worst is made clear and there is no room left for the curious to imagine that it was worse than it was. Another good result of Mr. Steuart's sensible candor is that, incidentally, it vindicates Stevenson's father. . . . When the full facts are fairly set out they amply justify any father's displeasure.

So careful a writer as Dr. W. L. Courtney, for many years editor of the *Fortnightly* and critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, says, 'It is a competent and careful piece of work, on which Mr. Steuart is to be congratulated.'

In the *Manchester Guardian* C. E. Montague, whose opinion is worth having if any opinion is, writes: 'Nobody who wants a feast of scandalous revelations should buy the book, for Mr. Steuart is not out to trade on that appetite. He does the job of an honest biographer in a decent, mannerly way.'

All this tempest in a teapot — though London is a pretty big teapot — makes one thing evident: Good or bad, justified or not, completely true or partly false in its statements, *Robert Louis Stevenson. Man and Writer* is an extremely interesting book. Dull ones do not ordinarily cause distinguished critics to lash themselves to fury. Their fate is to pass unnoticed.

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This Week

The older and, as Sir Herbert Russell cautiously adds, 'possibly loftier' ideals that animate British statesmen make it very hard for the chivalrous foreigner to sympathize with such a nation of vulgar money-grabbers as we Americans are. Just after doing our little best to help save civilization, we promptly turned around and began building a larger navy than England's. Of course Mr. Hughes soon put a stop to this, but Sir Herbert's notion seems to be that our retiring Secretary of State got his beard pulled at the Washington Conference.

* * *

A. A. Milne has written a funny triangle-play without any beds in it. Ariadne is a smooth young lady who teaches her spouse a lesson that we hope all *Living Age* husbands know already.

* * *

Frankfurters and sauerkraut, which are what our unpatriotic translator calls hot dogs and Liberty cabbage, were partly responsible for the delicately organized Kosta Todorov's departure from East Prussia. But when he arrived in Moscow, the showroom of Communism, conditions were even worse. A handful of factory workers — or the Proletariat, as a few incorrigible humorists still call them — have plastered the town with huge proclamations announcing their affection for the peasants, who glumly and dumbly fail to reciprocate.

* * *

Those who believe it is the straw and not the load that breaks the camel's back will throw all sorts of fits when they read the new information about the Serajevo shooting. But the more temperate of us will look back with a smile at England's more recent ultimatum to Egypt, which, we were assured, was given with only a little more provocation than Austria's note to Serbia in 1914. And, being temperate, we shall confine ourselves to silent speculation.

* * *

Chaikovskii's cold-chisel intellect took little time in cutting down to the heart of things. He recognized, for instance, that there are important differences between the Old and the New Testaments, and that the Psalms of David are not at all like the Sermon on the Mount. He even penetrated the Tolstoi pose.

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AMONG OUR AUTHORS

FROM his desk as naval editor of the *Western Daily Mercury*, Plymouth, **Sir Herbert Russell** went to Japan as Special Correspondent for Reuter's agency. He writes, therefore, not only as a naval expert, but also from recent and first-hand knowledge of 'Portents in the Pacific.' This is not his first work for Reuter's, whom he served as war correspondent at Gallipoli and on the Western front from 1915 to 1918. Sir Herbert has been in newspaper work for more than thirty years, and is the author of several novels.

In spite of the Teutonic sound of his name, **Dr. Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring** is a Cuban of the Cubans — one of the island republic's leading political students, who looks back with some misgivings over the first two decades of his country's independence. Among other writings, he has lately published a collection of semihistorical articles describing old customs in Cuba.

Henri de Kerillis is a journalist and former officer of the French army who has long been familiar with North Africa and who wrote one of the earliest authentic accounts of the capture by the Moors of the Spanish garrison at Fort Guebdani.

Kosta Todorov, former Bulgarian Ambassador in Belgrade and Bulgarian representative in the League of Nations, fought in France during the World War as a volunteer in the 'Russian Republican Legion.' In 1924 he made the trip which he describes in 'My Russian Impressions'; but previously he had lived for many years in Russia, where he received the greater part of his education and was connected with the revolutionary movement of 1905.

Mary Edith Durham is an English painter who has long been interested in the Balkans. Besides being Honorary Secretary of the Anglo-Albanian Society and a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Society, she is the author of *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, *The Burden of the Balkans*, *High Albania*, *Through the Lands of the Serbs*, and other books on similar subjects. Incidentally she was the illustrator of the volume on reptiles in the *Cambridge Natural History* — which by no means disqualifies her for the study of politics.

A. A. Milne — he was baptized Alan Alexander — is by all odds the most amusing of the younger British dramatists. A Scot, a Cambridge man, and an old editor of *The Granta*, on which so many lights of contemporary English letters first sharpened their pens, he plunged straight from the University into the whirl of London journalism. He was assistant-editor of *Punch* until the war broke out, when he abandoned literature to serve four years in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Though he had published books before and during the war, he became widely known in this country when the Theatre Guild produced his *Mr. Pim Passes By*.

French and English letters are the chief interests of **W. R. H. Trowbridge**, if we may judge him from his books, which include several novels, a French play, a study of Napoleon's sisters, and volumes on Mirabeau and the Maréchal de Saxe.

The extracts from **Chaikovskii's** diary, which appear in English for the first time in this issue of the *Living Age*, date from the later years of the composer's life, not long before his visit to America. Discussing themes so various as Tolstoi, music, the Bible, letter-writing, and Prohibition, Chaikovskii displays the breadth of his interests and not a little of his more intimate personality.

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COMING EVENTS ABROAD

THE month of April will be marked by a series of fairs and commercial exhibitions in various parts of Europe. The exhibition of hides and leather at Leipzig will be opened early in the month, to be followed later by a spring commercial and industrial exhibition at Innsbruck, the annual horse fair at Alessandria (Italy), an exhibition of motor-driven agricultural machinery and local products at Macerata (Italy), — for which no exact dates have been announced, — and an automobile show at Prague from the eleventh to the nineteenth. Frankfurt am Main will hold its Spring Fair April 17 to 22, and Hanover will follow with a Technical Fair April 20 to 24. Exhibits of furniture and office equipment open in Berlin April 30, continuing until May 9.

Paris will offer a number of special exhibitions, of which the largest is the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Art, lasting till October. The Comédie Française will at the same time offer special productions of the French classics, and simultaneously the Entreprise Générale will exhibit interior decorations. The Nouvel Essor will show works of Belgian artists March 20 to April 4; drawings and etchings by Maurice Asselin beginning April 7; and drawings by Picart Le Doux beginning April 28. The Galerie Visconti offers pictures by Fautrier April 28 to May 12. The Galerie Druet will exhibit pictures by modern artists March 23 to April 3, and by Simon Bussy and Edy LeGrand April 6 to 17. The most important artistic event, however, is the opening on April 30 of the Salon (first series), which will continue until June 28. Stamp-lovers will be interested in the International Philatelic Exhibition April 30 to May 10.

Activities in the South of France will include an aviation meet and bicycle races at Hyères-les-Palmiers; an open tournament at the Juan-les-Pins tennis club March 30 to April 5; a children's fête at Menton, April 5, followed by a commercial fête and the Bal du Comité des Fêtes; international football matches and children's fête at Cannes, April 12; and, at Nice, a children's battle of flowers April 13, children's costume ball April 14, military and scholastic tennis championships April 11 to 13, and the fifth Concours Hippique International Militaire April 17 to 29. This will be followed by the Grand Bal de la Reunion des Officiers Françaises and the Grand Bal du Comité des Fêtes. April 18 to 26 there will be local championship tennis matches.

The solemnities of Easter Week in Rome are the high point of the month in Italy, especially as this is the Holy Year. Other events, however, include the spring festival and tourist picnic at Abbazia; the traditional Easter festival and motor races at Palermo; a military riding-tournament at Cagliari (Sardinia); the Festival of St. Mark's at Venice; athletic meets, rifle matches, and the unveiling of a war memorial at Bellagio (Lake Como); and the opening of the racing-season at Milan with a grand steeplechase for a 75,000-lire prize.

The principal event of the month in Holland is the International Flower Show at Heemstede, near Haarlem, which began last month and will continue through May. Special exhibitions at this show will be the Spring display of the Royal Netherlands Agricultural Society, March 27 to April 5; the great Easter Flower Show, April 11 to 18; and the display of the Société Royale d'Agriculture et Botanique de Gand, April 24 to May 3. In Belgium the exhibition '*La Femme et l'Enfant*,' with exhibits from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, will open in the Palais Egmont, Brussels, April 18, and continue until May 20.

On April 3 takes place the Japanese state ceremony of Jimmu Tennoo Sai, commemorating the death of the first Emperor.

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A Young Man's Fancy

THE light turning of the male train of thought is one of the first signs of spring.

We are glad enough for a few signs. (N. B. Don't take this seriously if there is a blizzard in progress when you read it.)

But we are not here to speak, except indirectly, of the gauzier aspect of the grand passion.

* * *

"A Young Man's Fancy" is the title of a story that appears in the March number of Scribner's Magazine.

And, like the spring, it has a breath of freshness about it.

Luke Thomas is the son of Augustus Thomas, playwright, and this is one of his first stories.

* * *

Leigh Morton, that young woman whose first story, "Mrs. Denton Gets Off," created such a stir when it was published in Scribner's Magazine last May, is the author of "Three Moments," another story in the March number of Scribner's Magazine.

* * *

Thomas Boyd, whose stories have been considered the sanest and best about the late war, contributes what in our own private and unofficial opinion is his best short story — "Responsibility."

* * *

Scribner's Magazine these days always has that appearance of freshness and life which attracts one.

And its substance does not belie its appearance.

* * *

As one of our readers wrote "There's nothing yellow about Scribner's but the cover."

Neither yellow with age, nor lurid with sensational froth.

And we submit that this month the cover isn't even yellow.

It's orange.

* * *

In any consideration of the short story in America, stories or authors that have appeared in Scribner's Magazine are given high place.

* * *

It ranks at the top in publishing distinctive fiction.

* * *

It presents the best of the new writers first.

* * *

If you will look at the work of successful short story writers of the day you will find that many of their first stories were published in Scribner's Magazine.

* * *

Scribner's Magazine is always encouraging those writers who bring freshness, originality, and feeling to their work.

* * *

Outworn formulae are taboo. But that does not mean that we ban plot stories.

* * *

Sentimentality is gently ushered out of the door, but that does not mean that we ban emotion.

* * *

Watch the fiction in Scribner's Magazine.

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